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A

VOYAGE

TO

MADAGASCAR,

AND THE

EAST INDIES.

BY THE ABBE ROCHON,

Member of the Academies of Sciences of Paris and Peterſburgh, Aſtronomer of the Marine, Keeper of the King's Philoſophical Cabinet, Inſpector of Machines, Mouny, &c.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

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AN ACCURATE MAP OF THE ISLAND OF MADAGASCAR.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A MEMOIR ON THE CHINESE TRADE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this work may, in ſeveral reſpects, be uſeful to gentlemen who go to India, the Tranſlator has taken the liberty of adding to it a ſhort Memoir on the Chineſe Trade, written by Mr. Brunel, and now tranſlated, for the firſt time, into Engliſh.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN Vaſco de Gama had opened to the Europeans a paſſage to the ſeas of Aſia, by the Cape of Good Hope, the Portugueſe endeavoured, to the excluſion of every other nation, to ſecure to themſelves the rich commerce of that vaſt continent.

Before this period, an epoch memorable in the annals of navigation, the Mooriſh flag only was ſeen floating in the gulfs of Perſia and Bengal.

The Mooriſh veſſels, when they ſet out

from the ports of the Red Sea, directed their courſe, for the moſt part, to the gulf of Perſia; but it was not uncommon to ſee them ſtretch along the coaſts of Abyſſinia, and, without loſing ſight of land, enter the channel of Mozambique. In this channel they traded alternately with the inhabitants of the coaſt of Africa, and the iſlanders of Madagaſcar.

The ports which they principally frequented were Querimbe and Mozambique on the African coaſt, and Vingara and Bombetoc in Madagaſcar.

The Aſiatics, notwithſtanding the imperfection of their charts, and the extreme ignorance of their pilots, often engaged in the boldeſt enterpriſes. They not only viſited the coaſts of Malabar, but they even ventured to loſe ſight of land. They launched forth into the open ocean, and, after traverſ-

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ing the gulf of Bengal, purſued their way to the Moluccas and the Philippines, through the ſtraits of Sunda and Malacca.

The dangers inſeparable from a voyage, which muſt have been tedious and difficult to ſailors ſcarcely acquainted with the elements of the nautical ſcience, did not diſcourage them. Their commanders were invited to the Straits, and the Moluccas, by the temptation of a lucrative commerce. They were certain of finding in that Archipelago Chineſe and Japaneſe veſſels, which went thither to ſearch for nutmegs and cloves; and a reciprocal exchange of Perſian and Indian merchandiſe, with the merchandiſe of China and Japan, formed a trade equally advantageous to the Indian and the Chineſe.

At the period, therefore, when the Portugueſe doubled the Cape of Good Hope, the navigation of the Moors was not con-

fined merely to coaſting; and ſuch voyages, undertaken without any other compaſs than what was ſupplied by an imperfect knowledge of the apparent motion of the ſun and ſtars, certainly deſerve to be known by thoſe who ſtudy the progreſs and improvement of hydrography. The inſtrument uſed by pilots in the Indian ſeas for taking the latitude is in the form of a chaplet, the beads of which ſhew the altitude of the ſtars for the different places at which they are to touch. The poſition of the beads, with regard to the eye and the horizon, here ſerves as an index.

Much dexterity and long practice are neceſſary to uſe this inſtrument, the imperfections of which muſt be readily perceived by thoſe who have the ſmalleſt notion of navigation. I tried ſeveral times at Pondicherry to make uſe of it, but I could never obtain by it the altitude of a ſtar within a

degree

degree of the truth. I muſt, however, allow that, being ſhort-ſighted, obſervation to me becomes much more difficult and inconvenient than it would perhaps be to another.

Though the commerce which the Moors carried on in the Aſiatic ſeas cannot, in any reſpect, be compared to that which has been ſince carried on by the European nations, it was not altogether contemptible. So many celebrated writers have given the hiſtory of the riſe and decline of the European eſtabliſhments in India, that it would be entirely uſeleſs for me to ſay any thing here on that ſubject. My deſign, in this work, is, to give an account of the iſland of Madagaſcar, and of the advantages which might be derived from ſettlements there, were they made in ſuch a manner as to promote the happineſs and inſtruction of the iſlanders.

But, notwithſtanding every precaution,

and all the care that may be taken, infant eſtabliſhments in that iſland muſt always have a great dependence on the iſles of France and of Bourbon, on account of their proximity. It is of importance therefore to give ſome idea of them.

If the iſles of France and of Bourbon are, at preſent, the principal ſettlements which the French have in the Indian ſeas, it is only to their ſituation that they are indebted for that advantage.

The port of the former is the arſenal of the French forces, and the centre of their commerce.

The iſles of France and of Bourbon were diſcovered by the Portugueſe, who called the former *Cernè*, and the latter *Maſcarhenas*. The iſle of Bourbon has no port capable of receiving large veſſels. It is fifty leagues in circumference; is almoſt of a circular form; and its mountains are very high.

The

The ſummit of the mountain called *les trois Salaſſes*, is reckoned to be ſixteen hundred fathoms above the level of the ſea. This mountain ſtands nearly in the centre of the iſland.

The principal place in the iſle of Bourbon is called St. Dennis. It is in this town that the governors of the colony reſide. That celebrated aſtronomer the Abbé de la Caille found, by aſtronomical obſervation, that it lies in lat. 20° 51′ and long. 53° 10′ eaſt from the meridian of Paris.

The difficulty of landing at St. Dennis has cauſed a kind of bridge to be invented, which extends a good way into the ſea, and is raiſed ſo high above its level as to be out of the reach of the greateſt ſurges. From the extremity of this bridge hangs a ladder of ropes, and ſmall veſſels approach in ſuch a manner that thoſe who wiſh to go on ſhore can lay hold of the ladder, at the

moment when the ſea, by the violence of the ſurf, has attained to its utmoſt degree of elevation. This manner of landing is ingenious, though very inconvenient, on account of the vibratory motion of the ladder, and the ſhocks it experiences by the agitation of the ſea: but the ſurf is here ſo ſtrong, and breaks againſt the ſhore with ſuch violence, that without this expedient communication between the town and the harbour would be frequently interrupted.

The volcano of the iſle of Bourbon, though its eruptions are very common, has never occaſioned any devaſtation ſince the place was inhabited. The planters have had the prudence to remove from this formidable gulf, acceſs to which is ſo dangerous, if we may judge from the deſcription given of it by that learned naturaliſt, Mr. Commerſon.

M. de Cremont, then intendant of the iſle

iſle of Bourbon, ſpared neither care nor expences to enable Mr. Commerſon to approach as near as poſſible to the mouth of the volcano, and to examine its productions. He even did more: he accompanied him in his excurſion: and this enlightened zeal in a governor deſerves, without doubt, the grateful thanks of thoſe who cultivate the ſciences and intereſt themſelves in their progreſs.

Acceſs to the volcano of the iſle of Bourbon is very difficult: the country is burnt up, and à deſart for more than ſix miles round, while heaps of aſhes, lava, and ſcoriæ, together with fiſſures and precipices, render it very dangerous and troubleſome to aſcend to it. One muſt chooſe a favourable time, during ſerene weather, to viſit the mouth of this gulf, for a few drops of rain are ſufficient to excite an eruption. Thoſe who ſhould attempt to approach it, when

when the weather is unſettled, might loſe their lives by their imprudence*. The view

* The following account is given of this volcano, in a Memoir publiſhed by Mr. Brunel. "It is ſituated almoſt at the ſummit of a hollow truncated mountain, the baſe of which, gently inclining, reſts on a bed of calcined earth, at the diſtance of a full league from the ſea. Though the matter it contains in its bowels boils up continually, it does not always ſwell ſo much as to riſe through the crater. When an eruption takes place, the melted lava may be ſeen flowing down the ſides of the mountain in undulations, which follow each other in ſucceſſion, and exhibit the appearance of a flaming caſcade. The light which it diffuſes to a great diſtance, whether at land or at ſea, is equal to that of the moon when ſhe ſhines with full ſplendour. It is even a tradition, believed in the country, that this natural pharos firſt drew hither thoſe Europeans who viſited theſe coaſts.

"The environs of the volcano are parched and covered with ſal-ammoniac, native ſulphur, alum, pumice-ſtone, and ſcoria. A remarkable peculiarity which diſtinguiſhes this from all other volcanoes is, the frequency

view of a volcano, in the time of an eruption, is a very awful and majeſtic ſpectacle. The

quency of its eruptions, which are never attended with earthquakes: the ſecurity, therefore, of the inhabitants is not diſturbed by the vicinity of a phenomenon, which every where elſe is highly dangerous. It may not, perhaps, be improper to remark, that water has never been ſeen to ſpout up from this volcano, and that no hot mineral ſprings are found in the iſland.

"In the month of June, 1787, this volcano was obſerved in one of its greateſt eruptions. The ſummit of the mountain was covered with condenſed vapours, of a blackiſh colour, which roſe from the ancient crater in ſpiral clouds. On the 24th lava ran into the ſea. Nine days after it had been thrown up, it extended eighty fathoms in breadth in ſome places, and in others forty. A month after, the matter, which flowed then in abundance, formed a current to the ſea of about ſixty fathoms in breadth, and from fifteen to ſixteen feet in depth. The waves ſmoked at the diſtance of more than thirty fathoms from the place where the lava fell into the water, appearing around of a greeniſh yellow, and forming a band to the leeward of the ſame colour,

nearly

The ſtudy of thoſe ſubterranean fires which occaſion ſuch phenomena, and ſtill more that

nearly a league in length. This current, parallel to one older, and conſiſting in the like manner of ſeveral ſtrata of melted matter, formed a projection, the baſis of which was volcanic ſand mixed with a kind of iron droſs. Eleven days after the arrival of the lava at the ſea, a ſolid cruſt was formed at its ſurface, upon which it was poſſible to aſcend to within fifteen paces of the place from which it iſſued; but, as the heat then became inſupportable, the obſerver called to mind the tragical fate of Pliny, and repreſſed his curioſity. One, however, may venture, without any danger, to walk on a torrent of flowing lava, if care be taken to examine its effects. In flat places it ſoon cools at the ſuperficies, which then becomes hard like thick ice, whilſt the liquid matter may be ſeen through the crevices, continuing its courſe in perfect freedom below; but, ſometimes, meeting with obſtacles, it flows back, breaks the cruſt, and covers it with freſh boiling lava. In declivities, therefore, and ſinuoſities, it is long in acquiring a durable degree of ſolidity; and this the curious ought to obſerve with attention.

" On

that of the ſubſtances produced by them, cannot be too ſtrongly recommended to thoſe

" On the firſt of Auguſt the lava ceaſed to flow; but it ſtill emitted ſmoke, and appeared extremely red at the bottom. Some time after another crater or mouth was thought to have been diſcovered at the diſtance of a league from St. Dennis, the capital of the iſland. Clouds of ſmoke and a ſtrong heat proceeded from a ravine, which it was impoſſible to approach during the ſpace of a month; but at the end of that time it was perceived that the heat and ſmoke iſſued from a cavern, which was found to be the retreat of certain Maroon negroes. Fire having been kindled in this place, either by accident or on purpoſe, it had been nouriſhed by a quantity of leaves, ſtalks of maize, and other combuſtible ſubſtances, lodged in it for a long time, which burned very ſlowly, becauſe the cavern received little air. The remains of birds neſts found here plainly ſhewed that this cavern had not always been expoſed to the like degree of heat; and this added to other obſervations quieted thoſe alarms which had been excited by this new appearance. The iſle of France, in the neighbourhood, is conſidered as a coun-

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thoſe who wiſh to render their travelling uſeful to the advancement of ſcience.

Volcanic

try which has been expoſed to violent convulſions of nature. It abounds with caverns, caſcades, precipices, ſubterranean arches, iron mines, calcined ſtones, vitrifications, torrefied ſand, and pyrites, which are ſtriking veſtiges of ancient volcanoes; but, on account of their antiquity, their ſituation cannot now be aſcertained, nor their craters diſtinguiſhed. The moſt elevated mountains in this iſland are not above five hundred fathoms high, whereas in the iſle of Bourbon there are peaks which riſe more than fifteen hundred fathoms. Theſe two iſlands, which are diſtant from each other only thirty leagues, were, doubtleſs, formerly united, and have been detached by ſome prodigious effort of nature. We have every reaſon to believe that they are ſtill connected at the bottom of the ſea, and that there are ſubterranean paſſages which form a communication between them.

"The earthquake, which happened at the iſle of France, on the 4th of Auguſt 1786, ſeems to ſupport this conjecture. That morning, at thirty-five minutes after ſix, a calm ſucceeded a ſtrong breeze from the

E. and

Volcanic productions exhibit an immenſe variety of appearances. Filaments of glaſs, extremely

E. and E. S. E. which had prevailed for four days. A hollow noiſe, which terminated in a ſudden exploſion, like the report of a cannon, was heard in the S. W. quarter; and at the ſame inſtant two ſmart ſhocks were felt, one vertical and the other horizontal. At that time the barometer did not indicate the ſmalleſt change in the atmoſphere; and the E. S. E. breeze commenced a quarter of an hour after, and continued till eleven the night following. This ſtrange phenomenon was not attended with any accident fatal to the iſle of France; and, by accounts from the iſle of Bourbon, it appeared, that the volcano there had thrown up much larger quantities of lava than for ſome days preceding.

"We have reaſon therefore to ſuppoſe that the combuſtible ſubſtances in the caverns of the iſle of France, after fermenting, caught fire, and that having then endeavoured to force a paſſage, they experienced a reſiſtance proportional to their force, which muſt have produced thoſe ſhocks above mentioned; and that making an effort afterwards in every direction, they found

extremely fine, and almoſt reſembling hair, are ſometimes found at a very great diſtance from volcanoes. This ſpecies of lava is not at all common.

The origin of the colony of the iſles of France and Bourbon is connected with the firſt eſtabliſhments of the French in Madagaſcar. Were it not for the proximity of Madagaſcar to theſe iſlands, one could ſcarcely conceive why the latter ſhould have been choſen for the purpoſe of forming a reſpectable ſettlement. Theſe two iſlands are ſo ſmall, that they are hardly perceptible in a chart of the vaſt Indian Ocean.

It is well known, that ſeveral Frenchmen,

found a paſſage through ſubterranean galleries to the iſle of Bourbon, where, meeting with leſs reſiſtance, they iſſued through the crater of the volcano, which prevented that iſland from experiencing any ſhocks, though there might be the ſame commotion in both places." T.

who had ſuffered from the unhealthfulneſs of Madagaſcar, formed a reſolution of quitting that large iſland, in order to ſettle in the ſmall iſland of Bourbon, the air of which is exceedingly ſalubrious.

It was in the year 1664 that they put this deſign in execution; and they took the wiſe precaution of carrying along with them ſome ſheep and cows, together with a young bull.

The iſland, at that time, was uninhabited, and the ſoil uncultivated: but the coaſt abounded with fiſh, and the ground was covered with tortoiſes of an immenſe ſize. At firſt, the coloniſts lived upon fiſh, turtle, rice, potatoes and yams. They were forbid the uſe of butcher's meat, becauſe the preſervation of their live ſtock was a matter of the utmoſt importance.

When the ſeaſon became favourable, they planted ſugar-canes, and ſowed wheat.

Their firſt crops exceeded their expectations; and in a little time the ſucceſs of the colony was no longer doubtful. The life of the ancient patriarchs does not exhibit a truer picture of the happineſs always inſeparable from man, when he approaches to a ſtate of nature, and lives under a ſerene ſky, amidſt innocence and labour, than the ſituation of theſe coloniſts.

The inhabitants of Bourbon employed their ſugar-canes in making a kind of fermented liquor. The iſlanders of Madagaſcar had taught them the method of making this beverage, which, in my opinion, is preferable to the beſt cider of Normandy. It is a pity that a liquor ſo uſeful cannot be kept more than twenty-four hours after it ferments.

The ſmall number of oxen and ſheep, tranſported from Madagaſcar to Bourbon, inſtead of periſhing, acquired every day, in

this new land, an additional degree of increaſe. Theſe animals found in the woods, with which the iſland is covered, a ſhelter from the ſcorching ſun of the torrid zone; they fed upon ſucculent graſs; and appeared, above all, to delight in thoſe vaſt ſavannas, the productions of which are ſimilar to thoſe of Madagaſcar.

When the inhabitants of Bourbon had made a proper proviſion for their ſubſiſtence, by paying great attention to agriculture, the principal and the moſt productive ſource of all riches, they thought that coffee, in the courſe of time, might form an uſeful branch of commerce between their iſland and Europe. In the year 1718, therefore, they ſent to Moka and Aden for ſome young plants of the coffee-tree, and were not deceived in their ſpeculation. Theſe plants being cultivated with care, became in a few years very productive; and the

iſland ſoon afforded the French Eaſt-India company a very important article of trade.

While the ſmall French colony of the Iſle of Bourbon continued to proſper, that of the Dutch, eſtabliſhed in the Iſle of France, was much diſtreſſed, and in a languiſhing condition. I am unacquainted with the reaſon why the Dutch eſtabliſhed themſelves in this iſland, which they called Mauritius. I know, only, that they complained of the great devaſtation occaſioned in it by locuſts and rats.

In 1712 they reſolved to abandon entirely the eſtabliſhment which they had formed at the Iſle of France, in order to remove to the Cape of Good Hope. It may be readily conceived why they preferred a vaſt continent to a ſmall iſland.

The inhabitants of Bourbon were not ſorry for the departure of the Dutch; and they loſt no time in taking poſſeſſion of the

ſpots

ſpots where they had been eſtabliſhed. The Iſle of France has two good harbours, and is only thirty-four leagues diſtant from that of Bourbon. Though the air is ſalubrious, the iſland is neither ſo fertile nor ſo extenſive as Bourbon: but theſe diſadvantages are counterbalanced by the excellence of its ports, and by its being ſituated to the windward.

In 1734, the French Eaſt-India company having determined to form ſome conſiderable eſtabliſhments here, the care of that enterprize was entruſted to the celebrated Mahé de la Bourdonnais. That gentleman, born to command, becauſe he had abilities which enabled him to know mankind, and to enforce obedience, ſhewed in thoſe diſtant countries that he was as able a governor as a ſkilful mariner: the iſland is indebted to him, and to him alone, for its aqueducts, bridges, hoſpitals, and principal

magazines. In ſhort, every thing uſeful that ſtill exiſts there is the work of that truly great man. La Bourdonnais had a very extenſive knowledge of thoſe mechanic arts which are moſt common and moſt neceſſary for our wants. Often was he ſeen by the break of day, at the head of his labourers, driving a wheel-barrow, or handling the trowel and the compaſs, merely with a view to excite and keep up a ſpirit of emulation. After the example which he himſelf gave, it was hardly poſſible for any one not to concur, as far as he was able, in promoting the public advantage. Whatever, therefore, he planned or undertook for the benefit of the colony, during the twelve years of his adminiſtration, was always attended with ſpeedy and complete ſucceſs.

It was this governor alſo who made choice of the port to the north-weſt. A

man

man leſs enlightened would have perhaps preferred the port in the ſouth-weſt, becauſe it is larger and more commodious: but this able ſeaman knew, as much as any one, the advantages of a port to the leeward. On thoſe ſhores, where general winds prevail, leeward ports are alone ſuſceptible of an eaſy defence when attacked, as the enemies ſhips muſt always be towed in order to bring them into the harbour. By the ſame reaſoning the wind is always favourable for going out, another advantage, which, though inferior to the former, is not to be overlooked.

The cultivation of corn is that which ſucceeded beſt in the Iſle of France. The lands there produce ſucceſſively, every year, a crop of wheat and one of maize, commonly called Turkey corn. The *manioc* *, which

* *Manihot, mignoc* or *manioc*, is a plant which grows

which was tranſported from Brazil, is at preſent the ordinary food of the blacks.

The continual want of ſupplies by ſhips and ſquadrons has greatly impeded the increaſe of ſheep and horned cattle in this iſland. It produces, however, an excellent

in America and the Weſt Indies, and from the root of which a kind of bread is made, called *caſſada* or *caſſavi*. The juice of the root is a mortal poiſon; but when it has been properly extracted, the root is put over the fire, in order that all its aqueous, volatile, and noxious particles may be diſſipated: it is then grated down into a mealy ſubſtance, which is again dried; and it is afterwards formed into ſmall cakes, and baked, by being placed upon hot plates of iron. The milky juice of the *manioc* when ſwallowed, or when the root is eaten without being carefully prepared, brings on convulſions, and occaſions a violent retching and purging. It acts only on the nervous ſyſtem, and produces no inflammation in the ſtomach; but the ſtomach of a man or animal poiſoned by it, appears to be contracted one half. The French ſometimes call the bread made of this root *Madagaſcar bread*. T.

kind

kind of graſs, which ſprings up from the earth about the beginning of the rainy ſeaſon, and which comes to full perfection in the ſpace of three months. The inhabitants take advantage of that time to paſture their cattle and flocks; but when vegetation has ceaſed, nothing remains on the ground except ſome ſtraw too hard for the nouriſhment of animals. This ſtraw is ſo dry that the leaſt ſpark ſets it on fire, and the wind ſpreads the flames with ſo much rapidity, that there are no phyſical means of checking its progreſs. When ſuch an accident takes place, the cattle quit the ſavannas, and go to feed in the woods.

When the Portugueze diſcovered the Iſle of France, the land was covered with wood to the very ſummits of the mountains. The whole iſland was one vaſt foreſt compoſed of beautiful trees. Of theſe the moſt remarkable were ſeveral kinds of the palm-

tree,

tree, bamboos, ebony, matt-wood with large and ſmall leaves, tacamahaca, ſtinking-wood, and a multitude of others, which were exceedingly valuable.

When this iſland was firſt inhabited, the ground was all cleared by means of fire. It would, however, have been prudent to leave rows of trees here and there at certain diſtances. Thoſe rains which, in warm countries, are ſo neceſſary to render the earth fertile, ſeldom fall on ground after it has been cleared; for it is the foreſts that attract the clouds, and draw moiſture from them. Beſides, cultivated lands have no ſhelter to defend them from the violence of the wind. Cultivation without meaſure, and without method, has ſometimes done much more hurt than good.

Thoſe eminences which hang over the harbour, and defend it from the violence of the winds, have been cultivated to the very

tops.

tops. The chalk of the mountains is become dry, and the earth proper for vegetation has fallen down into the valleys. Thoſe large trees, which, when the iſland was inhabited, ſecured the earth from ſuch dangerous falls, have been either burnt or cut down. Torrents have been conſequently formed, and the greater part of the gravel waſhed down by them has choked up the harbour. The anchoring ground at preſent is not ſheltered from the violence of the ſea, nor the impetuoſity of the winds. Thus through an abſolute want of foreſight in the firſt ſettlers, and a deſire to promote their own temporary advantage, France is likely to be deprived of a port which is conſidered as the bulwark of its forces, and the moſt commodious ſtorehouſe of its commerce in the Indian ſeas.

M. de Tromelin, formerly a captain in the navy, an officer as fertile in reſources as

ſkilful

ſkilful and experienced in every part of his profeſſion, finding, however, that this evil might be remedied, became very anxious to accompliſh ſo important an object. At that time M. Poivre was intendant of the iſles of France and Bourbon. That celebrated man ſeeing all the advantages of M. de Tromelin's project, united with M. de Steinaure, a general officer, highly worthy of eſteem both by his knowledge and virtues, and who acted in the interim as governor, to requeſt, in the name of the colony, of the duke de Praſlin, then miniſter of the marine, the ſpeedy execution of a plan which would give the Iſle of France a ſafe harbour, where veſſels might be ſheltered from hurricanes. When the propoſed works were ordered, M. de Tromelin firſt employed himſelf in changing the courſe of the torrents by dykes and channels, which ſerved to collect the body of the waters, and

to

to convey them to ſea behind Cooper's Iſle, in a place where mounds of ſand and gravel could occaſion no obſtruction.

This, without doubt, was the moſt urgent part of the operation. The clearing of the harbour, or rather channel, might be afterwards effected without any obſtacle, in a period of time proportioned to the number of machines deſtined for the purpoſe of taking up the mud and ſand; for it is well known that each machine clears almoſt to the depth of twenty feet a day, when the wheels which make the two ladles act are worked by thirty-ſix men.

Mr. Tromelin did not confine his plan to that labour which was neceſſary for clearing the channel, and preventing it from being choked up in future. This officer had greater and more extenſive views. He remarked that the channel communicated with a vaſt baſin perfectly ſheltered from the

the moſt violent winds. This baſin, known under the name of *Trou Fanfaron*, is three hundred fathoms in length. In breadth it is ſixty fathoms, and the mean depth of the water does not exceed ten feet. It was neceſſary, therefore, to make it twenty feet deep, in order that it might be capable of receiving the largeſt veſſels, as fully loaded as poſſible. To effect this, nothing was requiſite but to remove ſome ſand-banks; and two machines, in leſs than ſix years, were able to clear away forty-five thouſand cubic fathoms of ſand which encumbered the baſin. But this was not the moſt embarraſſing part of the labour. The entrance of the baſin was ſhut up by a coral bank, to get rid of which appeared to be a work of great expence and difficulty. This obſtacle, however, did not diſcourage M. de Tromelin. After a judicious examination of its extent, and taking a number of found-

ings

ings very near to each other, he was enabled to form a proper plan for accompliſhing the object of his wiſhes, and by means of gunpowder he broke to pieces, under the water, that part of the bank which obſtructed the paſſage of veſſels.

No rock can reſiſt the expanſive force of an elaſtic fluid, when the engineer who employs it knows, by holes diſpoſed at ſuitable diſtances, to interrupt the communication of motion in ſuch a manner as to render the force proportional to the maſs. It is really aſtoniſhing that gunpowder is ſo little uſed for extirpating rocks under water, as there is no force greater or leſs expenſive when it is directed by intelligent men.

Had M. de Tromelin been acquainted with the ingenious method deviſed by M. Coulomb, a celebrated academician, for labouring under water, that able officer would, doubtleſs, have made uſe of it; and this grand

grand trial would have enlightened thoſe engineers who are entruſted with the care of the like operations in the ports of France.

When great hydraulic works are undertaken in countries periodically expoſed to violent winds and hurricanes, the execution of them ought to be conducted with as much ſpirit and expedition as poſſible, in order to oppoſe a great reſiſtance to the combined force of the wind and the waves.

One muſt have experienced a hurricane to form a proper idea of that formidable meteor. A hurricane is almoſt always accompanied with rain, thunder, and an earthquake. The atmoſphere appears to be on fire, and the wind blows with equal violence from every quarter of the horizon. A hurricane is a kind of ſpout, which ſeems to threaten that part of the earth upon which it falls with entire deſtruction. It is at leaſt

under

under this appearance that ſeamen obſerve it at a diſtance, and ſhips often remain becalmed a few leagues from the place where theſe terrible ſtorms burſt forth with the utmoſt fury. If the celerity of the wind exceeds fifty feet per ſecond, nothing then can withſtand its force; the largeſt trees are torn up by the roots, and the beſt-built houſes are thrown down. Neither the weight of anchors, the ſtrength of cables, nor the goodneſs of the bottom are capable of keeping ſhips at their moorings. The wind drives them on ſhore, and daſhes them to pieces, unleſs they form a bed for themſelves in the mud.

During the hurricane of March, 1771, I ſaw the main topmaſt of the Mars, a ſhip of ſixty-four guns, broke in the cap; and yet that hurricane was not near ſo violent as the hurricane which happened in the month of February the ſame year. Able ſeamen are

well acquainted with the force neceſſary to break a main topmaſt when ſtruck; they will not, therefore, think that I exaggerate when I eſtimate the velocity of the wind, during its moſt violent guſts, at an hundred and fifty feet per ſecond. The extraordinary variation of the barometer, on ſhores ſituated between the two tropics, is the only index hitherto known, by which a hurricane can be foreſeen ſome hours before its commencement.

At the time of the hurricane, which took place in the month of February 1771, the ſudden falling of the mercury gave me, as well as M. Poivre, great uneaſineſs. It was then four in the afternoon, and M. Poivre invited the port captain to his houſe: but that officer, who had been an eye-witneſs of the hurricane in the year 1761, was not ſtruck, as we were, with the variation of the barometer. He ſaid, that there were

more certain means of foretelling hurricanes. Twenty-four hours, ſaid he, before the hurricane commences, you will ſee the blacks come down from the mountain, and announce its approach. Beſides, the ſetting of the ſun will determine what meaſures I ought to purſue, in order to prevent, as much as poſſible, thoſe accidents which are inſeparable from theſe dreadful phœnomena. M. Poivre's entreaties, and my obſervations, not being capable of perſuading the captain, we were obliged to wait till ſunſet. The ſky was then pure and ſerene; but the mercury ſtill continued to fall in the tube of the barometer. The ſun ſet very beautifully, and the port captain, who had been a long time in the ſervice of the Eaſt-India company, left us in high ſpirits, and perfectly ſecure reſpecting the misfortunes with which the iſland was threatened. He ſeemed to pity us for conſidering the varia-

tion of the barometer as a matter of ſo much importance. One can ſeldom overcome the obſtinacy of a man, who, being acquainted only with the practical part of his buſineſs, entertains the abſurd prejudice that theory is of no uſe. Men of this kind are unfortunately too common; and thoſe who ſhould employ themſelves in expoſing the evils which ignorant and conceited commanders have cauſed, and ſtill cauſe, would do no ſmall ſervice to humanity.

The hurricane commenced at ſeven in the evening, that is to ſay, an hour after ſunſet. Before nine all the veſſels were driven on ſhore, except the *Ambulante* flute, and a ſmall corvette, called *le Verd Galand*. By a ſudden guſt the flute was forced out to ſea, and the corvette being made faſt to her by a cable, was entirely loſt.

The Ambulante, without ſails, without rudder, and without proviſions for the ſail-

ors,

ors, and a detachment of the Iriſh regiment of Clare, who did duty on board, was toſſed about by the winds for more than twelve hours. By their frequent ſhifting ſhe was driven quite round the iſland, and at length caſt, in a moſt miraculous manner, upon the only part of the coaſt where men in ſuch a violent ſtorm could ſave their lives. What renders theſe diſaſters more diſtreſſing is, the impoſſibility of their mutually aſſiſting each other. They muſt remain motionleſs amidſt the ruins by which they are ſurrounded; they muſt patiently wait for their fate, without being able to foreſee or avoid it. The violence and fury of the wind prevent them from quitting the ſhelter they have choſen, or the place into which they have been driven.

The hurricane continued eighteen hours without intermiſſion, and with equal violence. Neither the large quantities of rain

which fell, nor the thunder and lightning, were able to allay the fury of the winds: but at three o'clock next day the mercury, which had fallen twenty-five lines, remained for ſome minutes ſtationary. A little time after it again roſe; the ſudden guſts then ceaſed, the wind became more ſteady, and at ſix in the evening it was poſſible to give ſome aſſiſtance to the unfortunate people who had been ſhipwrecked. In ſuch terrible ſituations, man, preſſed down by the imperious yoke of neceſſity, ſeems to have loſt all ſenſibility. He waits, therefore, in a kind of ſtupor for the blow which is about to fall upon him. He endures in ſilence, and without murmuring, the evils by which he is afflicted. During this hurricane, the communications in different parts of the iſland were interrupted by the falling of trees, and the overflowing of waters. We were three weeks without hearing

hearing any news of the Ambulante, which had been caſt on ſhore at a place diſtant only ſix leagues from Port Louis in the Iſle of France. All the crops were deſtroyed. On that account it was requiſite that every effort ſhould be made to repair thoſe veſſels which had ſuffered leaſt by the ſtorm; and it was ſtill M. de Tromelin who rendered this important ſervice to the colony and to commerce. It was neceſſary to diſpatch inſtantly the greater part of theſe veſſels to Madagaſcar, in ſearch of ſtores and proviſions of every kind. It is under ſuch unfortunate circumſtances that the talents of able adminiſtrators diſplay themſelves to the greateſt advantage. M. Poivre, who, in the courſe of his adminiſtration, had ſhewn himſelf equally prudent and enlightened, had taken the ſalutary precaution to make ſeveral veſſels winter at the Cape of Good Hope. Theſe veſſels, when informed of

the diſaſter which had befallen the Iſle of France, brought it ſupplies in abundance, and theſe ſupplies ſaved the colony; for they arrived ſoon after the ſecond hurricane, the new ravages of which had depreſſed the courage and hopes of the unfortunate inhabitants. The damage which the ſhips ſuſtained in the harbour by the violence of the waves and the impetuoſity of the wind, in the ſecond hurricane, was much inferior to what they had ſuſtained by the firſt. The variation of the barometer informed them of their danger, and they each uſed the utmoſt expedition to provide for their ſafety *.

Had

* Theſe iſlands ſeem to be much expoſed to theſe deſtructive ſcourges. The hurricane which happened at the Iſle of France, on the night between the 9th and 10th of April, 1773, was attended with the moſt diſmal effects. "The ſtorm," ſays Mr. Brunel, from whoſe

Had M. Poivre's merit been leſs known, I ſhould have eagerly embraced this opportunity

whoſe memoir this account is taken, "announced itſelf about nine in the evening, when the moon appeared above the horizon: but its greateſt violence was between eleven and one in the morning. The roaring of the wind, and the noiſe of the thunder, were dreadful; while the lightning, which made the earth and the heavens appear as if on fire, ſtill added to the horror of the ſcene. The fear of the inhabitants did not ceaſe till towards five in the morning; but when day appeared, the ſpectacle was dreadful beyond deſcription. More than three hundred houſes were deſtroyed in the town of *Port Louis*, all the roofs were carried away, and the principal church was reduced to a heap of ruins. Many of the people were buried under the rubbiſh; others, bruiſed and mutilated, ſolicited aſſiſtance from their neighbours, who were not in a ſituation to afford them relief; and the ſtreets were ſtrewed with nails, ſplinters of wood, ſhingles, and fragments of every kind. All the veſſels in the harbour, in number thirty-two, were driven on ſhore and greatly damaged. Of ſeveral ſmall barks nothing was to be ſeen but the keels;

tunity of beſtowing upon his memory that tribute of praiſe which is reſerved for thoſe few

keels; and one had entirely diſappeared, without leaving the ſmalleſt trace that could lead to a diſcovery of its fate. Dead bodies were ſeen floating amidſt the wreck of the ſhips; and ſuch of the ſailors as had eſcaped death, ſtruggling againſt the irritated waves, were making uſeleſs efforts to reach the ſhore. In ſhort, nothing preſented itſelf to the ſight but conſternation, miſery, and diſtreſs. The deſolation in the country was no leſs afflicting; the maize, rice, and corn, were cut and diſperſed; the coffee and cotton plants, ſugar-canes, nutmeg and cinnamon trees, were torn up by the roots; the oldeſt trees were overturned, or ſtwiſted by the violence of the wind; manufactories and work-ſhops were deſtroyed; and the graſs appeared dry and withered, as if it had been burnt. In one of the windward quarters of the iſland, the ſea, hurried along by the tempeſt beyond its uſual boundaries, roſe more than forty feet, drove the inhabitants to the neighbouring eminences, in order to avoid being overwhelmed in their houſes; and extended to the adjacent plains and woods, where it left, when it retired,

few men, who, by their ſituation in life, have been benefactors to the human race. My heart is the more impelled to diſcharge this act of gratitude, as he honoured me with his tendereſt friendſhip: but the life of this illuſtrious man has been publiſhed by M. Dupont; and that celebrated writer is much more capable than I am to appreciate the talents of an adminiſtrator. Beſides, I am not a literary man; this may be readily perceived by the want of order and method which is obſerved in whatever I write. In publiſhing this work, therefore, I have had nothing in view but a deſire of being uſeful,

retired, fiſh of various kinds. This diſaſter occaſioned ſuch a ſcarcity of proviſions, that bread was ſold at eighteen ſous per pound, according to the currency of the colony: but a ſupply of corn and rice was afterwards procured from Bengal, the coaſt of Coromandel, the Cape of Good Hope, the iſland of Madagaſcar, and the Perſian gulf. T.

Having

Having from my earlieſt years applied, through taſte, to the ſtudy of the mathematics, the art of ruling is entirely unknown to me. The numerous and long voyages which I have made to various parts of the world may have perhaps given me ſome knowledge of mankind; but the more one knows them, the more one dreads to accept the honourable office of conducting and directing them.

The zeal with which M. Poivre was animated for the improvement of agriculture, induced him to advance conſiderable ſums of money to the planters, to enable them to cultivate corn. The magazines were always well ſupplied with proviſions, becauſe the firſt article of his agreement was that payment ſhould be made in the produce of the earth. The price of bread, therefore, ſeldom experienced any conſiderable variation.

M. Poivre,

M. Poivre, desirous to enrich the colony entrusted to his care, with every useful production distributed in such profusion throughout the four quarters of the world, purchased from the old East-India company, the garden of *Montplaisir*, which he wished to cultivate himself for the purpose of raising exotic plants. He set the first example of turning up the earth, in order to destroy radically all noxious weeds, and by this operation to ensure the success of his plantations.

It is well known that to M. Poivre alone the French colonies are indebted for the nutmeg and cloves; and this service, which will soon open a new source of commerce to France, will, doubtless, not be forgotten. To him also they are indebted for the bread-fruit, and the dry rice of Cochin-china. In short, his garden at *Montplaisir* contains a multitude of valuable plants, of which M.

Ceré,

Ceré, whoſe friendſhip he and I enjoyed, has given an excellent deſcription. To M. Ceré, at preſent, the care of that treaſure is entruſted; and thoſe who have the management of the colonies could not certainly have made choice of a more able and more zealous cultivator *.

I have

* M. Poivre, formerly intendant of the iſles of France and Bourbon, was born at Lyons, in the year 1719; and at an early period of life entered into the congregation of foreign miſſions, by whom he was ſent to China, ſome part of which he travelled over, and collected many important obſervations reſpecting the country, and particularly the ſtate of agriculture among the Chineſe. In returning to Europe, the veſſel in which he had taken his paſſage, was attacked by an Engliſh ſhip of war, and during the engagement he had the misfortune to loſe one of his arms by a cannon bullet. This unfortunate accident obliged him to renounce the eccleſiaſtical ſtate; but the Eaſt-India company finding him an active, intelligent man, made choice of him for eſtabliſhing a new branch of commerce in Cochin-

china.

I have here ſaid almoſt every thing reſpecting the iſles of France and Bourbon that

china. Having ſucceeded in this undertaking, he was, in 1766, ſent by the Duke de Choiſeul to the iſles of France and Bourbon, to ſuperintend thoſe colonies. In this ſituation he perfectly anſwered the expectations of the French miniſter. He excited among the inhabitants of thoſe iſlands a ſpirit for improving agriculture and the arts. He ſent to Madagaſcar for a ſupply of cattle and ſheep, in order to ſtock them with proviſions. He naturalized in them the bread-fruit tree; and, after much danger and difficulty, procured plants of the nutmeg and cinnamon trees, which being properly cultivated there, are now in a thriving condition, and likely to ſupply France with a valuable article of commerce. M. Poivre afterwards returned to France, and died of a dropſy in the breaſt, at Lyons, the place of his nativity, on the 6th of January 1786, in the ſixty-ſeventh year of his age. He left behind him ſome ſmall works, which ſhew that he was a judicious obſerver, as well as a philoſophical writer. Theſe are, *Voyage d'un Philoſophe*, containing obſervations on the manners,

that deſerves to be known. The mountains of the former are not high: the elevation of the higheſt does not exceed ſix hundred and twenty-ſix fathoms; the ſoil of them is ferruginous and productive. No venemous animals, except ſcorpions and millepedes, are known here. For beauty of climate, and ſalubrity of air, theſe iſles may be compared to the Fortunate Iſlands. They are ſeparated from the Indian Ocean by an archipelago abounding with ſhoals and quickſands. One of the principal objects of my voyage was to determine the ſituation of theſe ſhoals; and it is to M. Poivre

manners, arts, and agriculture of the people of Aſia and Africa; a *Memoir on the Preparation and Dying of Silk*; *Remarks on the Hiſtory and Manners of the Chineſe*; a *Speech delivered to the Inhabitants of the Iſles of France and Bourbon*; and ſome other manuſcript tracts, in poſſeſſion of the academy of Lyons, of which he was a member. T.

that

that navigators are indebted for this important research.

Ships which ſet out from the Iſle of France for India were forced, during the two monſoons, to purſue a long and indirect route, in order to avoid that archipelago of ſmall iſlands and ſhoals ſituated to the north. Whilſt navigators were ignorant of the true poſition of theſe dangerous objects, there was little ſafety for any ſquadron which might have attempted a more direct courſe. On the ſouth ſide of the Line, from the eighteenth degree of latitude to the twenty-eighth, the wind blows from the ſouth-eaſt during the whole year. From the eighteenth degree to the Equinoctial, the ſouth-eaſt monſoon commences in April, and continues till October, at which period it is ſucceeded by the eaſtern monſoon. On the north ſide of the Line the caſe is entirely contrary.

Thoſe who depart from the Iſle of France for India, in the fine ſeaſon, ſteer towards the northermoſt point of Madagaſcar, and paſſing afterwards between the flats of Patrom and the Amirantes, croſs the Line in the fiftieth degree of longitude. Meeting with the weſtern monſoon on the north ſide of it, they traverſe the Maldives, between Keloé and Shewlipar; and then approaching Cochin, the reſt of the voyage is nothing but mere coaſting.

Veſſels which ſet out, in the bad ſeaſon, from the Iſle of France for Pondicherry, are obliged to purſue a much longer and more indirect courſe. They go in queſt of the variable winds as far as the thirty-ſixth degree of ſouth latitude, and then ſteer in ſuch a direction as to be able to cut the Equinoctial in the eighty-fourth degree of longitude.

If a more perfect knowledge of that archipelago

chipelago enables navigators, at preſent, to attempt, in both ſeaſons, a more direct route, I flatter myſelf that I have, in ſome meaſure, rendered that ſervice to navigation, as I was the firſt, who, by aſtronomical obſervation, determined the poſition of the moſt dangerous of theſe ſmall iſlands. However little verſed people may be in the ſcience of navigation, they muſt be ſenſible that reſearches of this kind are accompanied with continual dangers. The principal places, the ſituation of which I determined, are the Secheyles iſlands, the flat of Cargados, Salha de Maha, the iſland of Diego-Garcia, and the Adu iſles.

The iſland Secheyles has an exceeding good harbour. It is ſituated in the latitude of 4° 38′ ſouth, and in the longitude of 53° 15′ eaſt from Paris. This iſland is covered with wood to the very ſummit of the mountains. It abounds with land and ſea

tortoiſes, ſome of which weigh three hundred pounds. In 1769, when I ſpent a month here in order to determine its poſition with the utmoſt exactneſs, Secheyles and the adjacent iſles were inhabited only by monſtrous crocodiles; but a ſmall eſtabliſhment has been ſince formed in it for the cultivation of nutmegs and cloves. In one of theſe iſlands, called the Iſle of Palms, there is found a tree which bears that celebrated fruit, known by the name of the cocoa of the Maldives, or ſea cocoa. The reader will find a deſcription of it at the end of the liſt of plants growing in Madagaſcar.

In this introduction I ought to take notice of thoſe objects only which ſtruck me moſt. Among the number of theſe is, the port of Diego-Garcia. That iſland, which we judged to be about twelve leagues in circumference, has a very pleaſing aſpect.

Its

Its form is like that of a horſe-ſhoe. Its greateſt breadth is not above a quarter of a league: yet the land is high enough to incloſe and ſhelter a vaſt baſin, capable of containing the largeſt fleet. This baſin is about four leagues in length, and its mean breadth is about one. It forms an excellent harbour, and has two entrances on the northern ſide. Theſe paſſages are exceedingly beautiful. The poſition of it, according to obſervation, I determined to be in 7° 14′ ſouth latitude, and 68° eaſt longitude from Paris.

With regard to the ſhoals which abound in this archipelago, they are as yet not all known. They are not to be found in the old charts of M. d'Apres. That hydrographer was deficient in that ſpirit of enquiry ſo neceſſary to bring nautical charts to perfection; for he did not derive from the materials he had in his hands all that

advantage which an able aſtronomer might have obtained for the ſafety of navigators. I here ſpeak from a thorough knowledge of the ſubject. The collection of charts of the Iſle of France is full of notes written by my hand, in which I clearly prove that he has confounded Artove with Agalega, and Cargados with St. Brandon, though among his papers he had various plans of theſe ſhoals and iſlands; and that he has committed a multitude of other errors leſs ſtriking, but ſtill of great importance. I have indeed rectified them as far as I was able; for in objects, which ſo eſſentially concern the ſafety of navigators, one ought not, through private conſiderations, to withhold or delay any thing that may tend to improve hydrography. But if I have treated M. d'Apres with too much ſeverity, I have always paid a juſt tribute of applauſe to his zeal, and his conſtant deſire of rendering

his

his labours useful. That hydrographer could require nothing more from a man who looks only to things, and pays no attention to individuals. Besides, having been nearly shipwrecked on the Cargados, because it pleased that hydrographer to confound Cargados with St Brandon, though a plan of the former was taken by the boats the Charles and the Elizabeth, and though one of the latter is given in the *English Pilot*, was it not my duty to shew that these two dangerous shoals differ essentially, both in their form and their longitude, as they lie at the distance of fifty leagues from each other? Cargados has the form of a crescent, and St. Brandon that of an equilateral triangle. M. d'Apres, confounding these two places, has in his chart given them a mean position, merely because in the old charts he found them both placed in the same latitude. This position is so false

that the moſt expert navigator is ignorant what route he ought to purſue in order to avoid them.

On the memorable day of the paſſage of Venus over the ſun's diſk, in the month of June 1769, I could not make an obſervation of that important phenomenon, though the ſky was pure and ſerene, becauſe the corvette on which I had embarked was in danger of being ſhipwrecked on the Cargados. To avoid deſtruction we were obliged to double, againſt the wind, the moſt eaſtern point of that formidable ſhoal. It muſt be allowed, therefore, that after ſuch an accident I have great reaſon to miſtruſt that opinion, too much credited, of the correctneſs of M. d'Apres' charts.

I cannot here enter into any farther detail reſpecting the archipelago which ſeparates India from the Iſle of France; but I will venture to affirm, that it is neceſſary it

ſhould be known, before more direct routes are attempted, during the two monſoons. More direct routes are by no means new; they were purſued formerly by navigators; and a knowledge of the winds, and an inſpection of the chart, will eaſily enable ſeamen to find them out. A long diſſertation, therefore, would be quite foreign to the ſubject of which I propoſe to treat. It is however of ſome importance for elucidating a digreſſion, to be found in the courſe of the following work, on the utility of baniſhment, to give an account of ſome ſhipwrecks, which will ſerve to prove, that men left by accident on barren coaſts or deſert iſlands, may find, in the fiſh and animals which abound on the borders of the ſea, a ſure means of ſubſiſtence.

A ſhip, called the *Heureux*, having on the 30th of Auguſt 1769, ſet out from the Iſle of France, in order to proceed to Bengal,

unex-

unexpectedly fell in with the iſles of Jean de Nova. The captain wiſhed to put to windward, and by this manœuvre avoid the dangers which threatened him. As ſoon as he had doubled them, he directed his courſe to the N. E. ¼ N. with a view of ſhortening his paſſage by ſome days; for he was ſenſible that he ought not to neglect any thing that might haſten his arrival at Bengal, becauſe the ſeaſon was too far advanced. But in this route, the veſſel in the middle of the night was driven upon ſome low flats, which left no hopes of her ſafety. Theſe flats were ſurrounded by a chain of breakers, which augmented the fears of the crew: all their exertions were of no avail, and the veſſel was juſt on the point of being daſhed to pieces, when the captain threw out an anchor in ſuch a manner as gave him reaſon to conclude that the ſhip would be wrecked on one of the flats which was a little more

elevated

elevated than the reſt. This manœuvre ſucceeded, and the people were able to wait for the approach of morning on the top of the maſts. The break of day, however, did not extricate them from their alarming ſituation; but at half after ſix they had ſome dawn of hope. Perceiving at a diſtance a ſmall iſland of ſand, the whole crew tranſported themſelves thither, in ſucceſſion, by means of a canoe, which the captain, with wiſe precaution, had cauſed to be launched into the ſea, before the fatal moment when his ſhip ſtruck. Unluckily, this iſland of ſand was only a kind of ſhoal, which became dry at low water. In this cruel perplexity, the captain had no other alternative but to ſend his canoe to ſeek aſſiſtance on the coaſt of Africa. The unfortunate people who were diſpatched in it, eight days after their departure fell in, on their paſſage, with a rock, which they

named the *Iſland of Providence*. This rock was not entirely barren; they found on it water, ſea tortoiſes, and cocoas. Nine of the boat's crew remained here, while two vigorous rowers endeavoured to return to the ſand iſland, where the reſt of the ſhip's company had taken ſhelter until aſſiſtance ſhould be brought to them. This attempt was the more hazardous, as they every moment ſaw themſelves in danger of being ſwallowed up by the high tides, the fatal period of which was faſt approaching. At the end of three days, however, the canoe reached the place of its deſtination; but as it was too ſmall to receive all the people who had been ſhipwrecked, they ſupplied this deficiency by a raft conſtructed of the remains of their veſſel. It was made ſufficiently large to contain ſuch proviſions and utenſils as were neceſſary for building and victualling a ſmall ſhallop. This raft was

made

made fast to the canoe, and in that manner towed to the Island of Providence. On this rock these people continued three months, employed in constructing a shallop, twenty-five feet in length, in which they had at length the good fortune to reach Madagascar without any accident. The latitude of the Isle of Providence was observed to be nine degrees five minutes south. Its longitude is reckoned to be forty-nine; and it is supposed that it lies N. N. W. some degrees west from the Isle of France.

M. Moreau, captain of a small vessel called *le Favori*, being dispatched from the Isle of France, on the 9th of February 1757, for Narsapoor, fell in, on the 26th of March the same year, with the Adu islands. His observed latitude there was 5° 6′ S. and his longitude, by estimation, 66° E. from the meridian of Paris. Having ordered some of his people to go on shore in a canoe, he

was

was obliged to leave them behind, becauſe, not being able to find anchorage, the currents, which carried his veſſel rapidly towards the weſt, drove her a great way to the leeward. M. Moreau told me, that ſix leagues to the ſouth of theſe iſlands he fell in with a ſand bank, where there was a good bottom, and that he made every effort in his power, though in vain, to rejoin his canoe. I am perſuaded that the reader will peruſe with ſatisfaction the relation which M. Riviere, the officer who commanded the canoe, has given of the Adu iſles, and of the misfortunes which he and his companions experienced.

The crew of the canoe conſiſted of three white men and five Laſcars. M. Riviere rowed round theſe iſlands, without being able to find any place where he could eaſily land. Having loſt ſight of the veſſel for ſeveral days, he, however, reſolved to attempt

tempt to land on a ſmall iſland, which was not a league in circumference; and he accordingly accompliſhed his purpoſe, but with the utmoſt difficulty.

Theſe iſlands, which are twelve in number, are connected by a reef of rocks, which, at low water, afford a paſſage from the one to the other.

M. Riviere adds, that they form a bay which may be about ſix miles in circumference. The paſſage which affords an entrance to it is on the eaſtern ſide: he ſounded it, and found it to be thirty fathoms deep. This bay, which is of a circular form, has in its middle a ſand-bank nearly ſquare, and almoſt a quarter of a league in circumference. It abounds with ſhell-fiſh, and fiſh of various other kinds.

Theſe iſles are flat and covered with cocoa trees. The crew of the canoe lived here for three months on birds, fiſh, ſhell-fiſh, and cocoas;

cocoas; but they found in them neither water nor tortoiſes.

When the hatchets, which enabled them to cut down the cocoa trees, were unfit for ſervice, M. Riviere formed a reſolution of proceeding to the coaſt of Malabar, though he had neither charts nor compaſs. This officer, therefore, cauſed his canoe to be loaded with cocoas, and embarked in it with the two white men. The Laſcars conſtructed a raft, called by the Indians, *Catimaron*, which was to be towed after the canoe, and which carried the remainder of their proviſions. Directing their courſe N. N. W. they fell in with a high ſhoal four or five hours after they had loſt ſight of land. Some days after their departure, the ſea, in which there was a prodigious ſwell, overſet the float. The whites then propoſed to Mr. Riviere to abandon the

Laſcars,

Laſcars, becauſe the canoe was too ſmall; but he rejected that propoſition with indignation. He took the Laſcars on board the canoe, though he had proviſions only for thirteen days, and arrived ſafe at Cranganore, near Callicut, twenty-eight days after his departure from the iſles of Adu. It would be difficult to relate what dangers and fatigue he experienced in that paſſage; but his generous and humane conduct, in ſo trying a ſituation, merits the greateſt praiſe.

The Iſle of Sable was diſcovered in 1722 by a veſſel called the Diana, commanded by M. de la Feuillée: it is flat, and not much more than a quarter of a mile in circumference. At its northern and ſouthern extremities, however, freſh water fit for drinking was found at the depth of fifteen feet. The *Utile*, Captain de la Fargue, being ſhipwrecked in 1761, the officers and the

crew, conſiſting chiefly of blacks, took refuge upon this ſmall iſland. During ſix months which they remained on it, they conſtructed a chaloupe from the remains of their ſhip, in which the whites embarked, and without any accident reached St. Mary, in the iſland of Madagaſcar, after a very ſhort paſſage. The blacks remained upon the ſhoal, always waiting, but in vain, to receive ſome aſſiſtance from the whites. Every man poſſeſſed of the leaſt humanity muſt be ſtruck with horror, when he knows that theſe poor blacks were ſuffered to periſh in great miſery, and that no attempt was made to ſave them.

A corvette, called *La Dauphine*, commanded by M. de Tromelin, a lieutenant in the navy, and brother to the gentleman before mentioned, fell in with the Iſle of Sable on the 29th of November 1776. Having by his ſkill and abilities overcome

all thoſe obſtacles which prevent navigators from approaching that dangerous ſhoal, he had the good fortune to bring back to the Iſle of France, the wretched remains of the crew of the *Utile*. Eighty male and female blacks had periſhed, ſome through hunger, and others in attempting to ſave themſelves on rafts. Seven negreſſes ſupported for fifteen years all the hardſhips of the moſt diſtreſſing ſituation that can be imagined. The moſt elevated part of this flat is only fifteen feet above the level of the ſea. It is ſix hundred fathoms in length, and three hundred in breadth. The plumage of birds, faſtened together with much ingenuity by theſe negreſſes, ſupplied them with clothes and covering. This iſland is abſolutely barren, and thoſe on it are not ſheltered from the fury of the waves in the time of ſtorms. Theſe ſeven negreſſes, who eſcaped from all thoſe evils which ariſe from famine and the

abſolute want of every neceſſary, carried with them a young child, who partook of the extreme weakneſs of its mother. They related, that during the time of their reſidence on the iſland, they had ſeen five veſſels, ſeveral of which had in vain attempted to land at the place of their captivity. A ſmall veſſel, called *La Sauterelle*, for ſome time gave them hopes of being at length delivered from their melancholy ſituation; but the canoe of that veſſel, through a dread no doubt of being wrecked upon the iſland, where the crew had before experienced the utmoſt difficulty in landing, bore off ſuddenly, and with ſo much precipitation that one of the ſeamen was left behind. This man, who fell a victim to his courage and humanity, ſeeing himſelf abandoned, formed the deſperate reſolution of attempting to make his way to Madagaſcar on a raft. He embarked with three negroes and three negreſſes,

greſſes, two months and a half before the arrival of the corvette *la Dauphine.*

If, in this introduction, I have taken the liberty to inſert a diſſertation on the iſles of France and Bourbon, and that Archipelago full of ſhoals which is ſituated to the north of theſe iſles, it was, as I have already obſerved, becauſe I thought it highly neceſſary to point out to navigators the obſtacles which they will have to encounter when they attempt, during the bad ſeaſon, to proceed to the coaſt of Coromandel by a direct courſe. I had entered into very minute details on this ſubject, for according to the original plan of this work, it was to be divided into two diſtinct parts; but owing to unforeſeen circumſtances, the nautical part of my voyage will not appear for ſome time, though it was printed above five years ago, as well as that which is now publiſhed.

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ANTANACTES
ANTAMBAHOMBES
ANTAVARA
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ANDRIANES
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VOYAGE

TO

MADAGASCAR.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND.

THE iſland of Madagaſcar has excited the avaricious deſires of the Europeans, ever ſince it had the misfortune to be tolerably known. Its extent, together with the richneſs of its ſoil and productions, ſeemed to offer, to the people who ſhould make a conqueſt of it, commercial advantages which they would not, certainly, have ſuffered themſelves to neglect. Luckily however, the unwholeſomeneſs of the climate has hitherto ſaved it from the yoke of thoſe civilized nations, who aſſume the barbarous

and unjuſt right of ſubjecting to their authority thoſe tribes whom they call *ſavages*, merely becauſe they are unacquainted with the manners and cuſtoms of Europe.

There is not one of theſe civilized nations that can boaſt of having ſacrificed even a few of the moſt trifling intereſts of commerce, to the ſacred principles of the law of nature. All of them have been unjuſt and barbarous: all of them have carried the ſword, fire, and diſeaſe into every place to which they were attracted by the hopes of gain. Ought they to forget that the ſoil upon which theſe ſavages live belongs to them, as much as that upon which we live belongs to us?

The Europeans would have acquired more ſolid and laſting advantages, had they endeavoured to introduce induſtry and the arts into thoſe countries which are deſtitute of them. Theſe preſents would not have

been unproductive; and commerce would have soon experienced how much preferable that mild and humane method is, to the unjuſt and cruel means which they employed to ſubdue the unfortunate inhabitants of all thoſe countries which held forth to them any new objects of wealth.

The iſland of Madagaſcar was diſcovered, in 1506, by Lawrence Almeyda; but the Perſians and Arabs knew it from time immemorial, under the name of *Sarandib*.

Alphonſo Albuquerque commiſſioned Ruy Pereira dy Conthintho to explore the interior part of it, and ordered Triſtan d'Acunha to ſail round it, and mark the bearings of its principal capes and head-lands.

This iſland is divided into twenty-eight provinces, which are, *Anoſſy*, *Manapani*, the valley of *Amboule*, *Vohitzan*, *Watte-Manahore*, *Ycondre*, *Etomampo*, *Adchimouſſy*, *Erengdranes*, *Vohitz-Anghombes*, *Manacarongha*,

Mantatane, Antaveres, Ghalemboule, Tamatave, Sahaveh, Voulou-Voulou, Andaſoutchy, Manghabey, Adcimoutchy, Mandrarïy, Anpatre, Caremboule, Mahafalley, Foulouvey, Sivah, Yvandrhou, and *Machicores.*

When the Portugueſe diſcovered Madagaſcar, they wiſhed to give it the name of the iſland of St. Lawrence. In the reign of Henry IV. the French named it *Ile Dauphine:* but though its real name is *Madecaſſe,* it is generally known under that of Madagaſcar.

This large iſland, according to ſeveral learned geographers, is the *Cerne* of Pliny, and the *Minuthiaſde* of Ptolemy.

It extends almoſt N. N. E. and S. S. W. and lies between the twelfth and twenty-ſixth degrees of ſouthern latitude.

We may reckon that the ſuperficies of this iſland, ſo celebrated for the fertility of its ſoil, and the variety of its productions, contains

contains two hundred millions of acres of excellent land. It is watered on all ſides by ſtreams and large rivers; and above all by a great number of ſmall rivulets, which have their ſources at the bottom of that long chain of mountains which ſeparates the eaſtern from the weſtern coaſt. The two higheſt mountains in the iſland are Vigagora in the north, and Botiſtmene in the ſouth.

Theſe mountains contain in their bowels, abundance of foſſils and valuable minerals. The traveller, who, in the purſuit of knowledge, traverſes for the firſt time wild and mountainous countries, interſected by ridges and valleys, where nature, abandoned to its own fertility, preſents the moſt ſingular and varied productions, cannot help being often ſtruck with terror and ſurpriſe on viewing thoſe awful precipices, the ſummits of which are covered with trees, as ancient, perhaps, as the world. His aſtoniſh-

ment is increaſed when he hears the noiſe of immenſe caſcades, which are ſo inacceſſible that it is impoſſible for him to approach them. But theſe ſcenes, truly picturesque, are always ſucceeded by rural views, delightful hills, and plains where vegetation is never interrupted by the ſeverity and viciſſitude of the ſeaſons. The eye with pleaſure beholds thoſe extenſive ſavannas which afford nouriſhment to numerous herds of cattle, and flocks of ſheep. Fields of rice and potatoes preſent, alſo, a new and highly intereſting ſpectacle. One ſees agriculture flouriſhing, while nature alone defrays almoſt all the expences: the fortunate inhabitants of Madagaſcar never moiſten the earth with their ſweat; they turn it up ſlightly with a pick-axe; and this labour alone is ſufficient. They make ſmall holes in the ground at a little diſtance from each other, and throw into them a few grains of rice, over which they

they ſpread a little mould with their feet. What proves the great fertility of the ſoil is, that a field ſown in this manner produces an hundred fold.

The foreſts contain a prodigious variety of moſt beautiful trees, ſuch as palms of every kind, ebony, wood for dying, bambous of an enormous ſize, and orange and lemon trees.

Timber fit for maſts, and for conſtructing ſhips, is no leſs common than that employed by carpenters and cabinet-makers. Flacourt ſays, that he ſent to France, in 1650, fifty-two thouſand weight of aloe wood of an excellent quality. Phyſicians call this wood *agallochum*, and the Portugueſe eagle-wood.

Theſe numerous trees and ſhrubs are ſurrounded by a multitude of paraſite plants and vines. In theſe foreſts may be found agaric

and muſhrooms, the colours of which are lively and agreeable, and which have an exquiſite ſavour. The Malegaches call them *holat*, and know very well how to diſtinguiſh thoſe which are not prejudicial to the health. Uſeful gums and reſins are alſo collected here: the milky juice which the iſlanders draw from trees, called in their language *finguiere* *, produces, when it coagulates, that ſingular ſubſtance known to naturaliſts by the name of elaſtic gum. The elaſticity of this reſinous gum has been lately employed in various arts; ſurgery has even derived ſome benefit from it, as it ſerves to make excellent bandages: but it is evident, that this valuable ſubſtance may be uſed with advantage for many other purpoſes.

All the foreſts of Madagaſcar abound with

* *Iatropha elaſtica.* LINN. T.

plants

plants unknown to botaniſts, ſome of which are aromatic and medicinal, and others fit for dying.

Flax, a kind of hemp, which, in length and ſtrength, ſurpaſſes that of Europe, the ſugar-cane, wax, different kinds of honey, tobacco, indigo, black pepper, gum lac, amber, ambergreaſe, ſeveral ſilky and cottony ſubſtances, would long ago have been objects of commerce, which Madagaſcar might have furniſhed in profuſion, had the Europeans, ſince they frequented the iſland, endeavoured to diffuſe among the iſlanders that knowledge which is neceſſary for preparing and rendering valuable the articles above mentioned. The moſt indefatigable botaniſt, in the courſe of a long life, would ſcarcely make himſelf even ſlightly acquainted with the natural hiſtory of all the vegetable productions that grow in this iſland,

iſland, the extent of which, in latitude, comprehends ſeveral climates.

Every reſearch, which tends to give us a knowledge of the productions of Madagaſcar, will be no leſs uſeful to commerce than to the improvement of arts and manufactures.

There are, doubtleſs, few countries in the world where navigators can find, in greater abundance, and at leſs expence, refreſhments of every kind.

It was in the great bay of Antongil, that M. Mahè de la Bourdonnais, with as much ſkill as expedition, found means to repair the loſſes and misfortunes which his ſquadron had ſuſtained: without the reſources which he procured here, that able ſeaman would have, perhaps, not been in a condition to put to ſea; and might, conſequently, have failed of that great ſucceſs in India which has given a luſtre to his memory.

The

The long ſtay which M. de la Bourdonnais made in the bay of Antongil, to repair his ſhattered veſſels, filled him with regret during his whole life, that he had not acquired more knowledge of the productions of Madagaſcar while he was governor of the iſles of France and Bourbon. This celebrated man was fully ſenſible of the utility which that large iſland might be to the colony over which he had preſided.

Timber for building houſes and conſtructing ſhips, pitch and tar, whale oil, ſalt-fiſh of all kinds, indigo, tobacco, manufactured hemp and flax, with cotton and different kinds of ſilk, appeared to him very important objects of commerce. He admired with what dexterity the women of Madagaſcar weave thoſe beautiful pieces of ſtuff, which ſerve them for clothing; ſome of them are made of the filaments of the leaves of a plant called *raven*, others more highly valued

lued by the natives, but in leſs requeſt among the Europeans, are manufactured of cotton and ſilk.

M. de la Bourdonnais was no leſs ſtruck on ſeeing the induſtry with which theſe people forge and melt iron and other metals; but he ſet more value on their manner of twiſting ſmall cables, which are employed in fiſhing for whales, and in mooring their piroguas.

He hoped that the natural ingenuity of theſe iſlanders, and their taſte for the mechanical arts would render it a matter of little difficulty to introduce into Madagaſcar ſeveral branches of commerce, uſeful both to Europe and the French colonies in the iſles of Bourlon and France. He propoſed therefore to engage the directors of the Eaſt India Company to erect there manufactories of ſail-cloth, forges, founderies and rope-

walks.

walks. The population of Madagaſcar is ſufficiently extenſive to give us reaſon to expect ſucceſs from ſuch eſtabliſhments: beſides, in that country, labour and raw materials are exceedingly cheap.

No dread was to be apprehended that M. de la Bourdonnais would lead the directors of the company into great expence for warehouſes and buildings. On the contrary, he wiſhed they might have the prudence to imitate the ſimplicity and economy obſerved by the Malegaches, in the conſtruction of their houſes. Nothing, indeed, would be more ruinous than to raiſe in this wild country edifices like thoſe uſed by us for carrying on manufactories of that kind. It is too common in Europe to ſee uſeful eſtabliſhments languiſh, and, ſometimes, even occaſion bankruptcy to thoſe who ſet them on foot, becauſe they have been ſo imprudent as to launch out into an extravagance of build-

building, which is almoſt always of no utility to the principal object of their plan.

The induſtry of theſe people cannot, certainly, in any manner, be compared to that of the Europeans. It is impoſſible to calculate exactly the immenſe loſs of time which is occaſioned to them, by the coarſeneſs of their tools, and the imperfection of their arts. The ſavage does not know, as we do, the advantages of dividing labour, which procures to each individual the greateſt poſſible degree of dexterity, and, beſides, ſaves time, which artiſans always loſe in leaving one kind of work to undertake another. When one, however, has been a witneſs to the laborious care of the ſavages, and to the patience which they employ in order to ſucceed in the moſt common arts, one cannot help honouring them with that grateful applauſe which is due to thoſe, who, among us, exert themſelves in bringing manufac-

tures

tures and the arts to perfection. Nothing is neceſſary but ſome new inventions to change the induſtry of a great nation. The invention of the ſtocking-loom, and the more recent diſcovery of ſpinning cotton by machinery, have operated a great revolution in theſe two branches of manufacture. Neither knitting nor ſpinning by the hand can ever in future come in competition with work executed by machines.

Ye Europeans who travel into theſe diſtant countries, communicate to thoſe people, whom you call ſavages, your learning and your knowledge; make it an indiſpenſable law of your duty to behave to them with that juſtice, that equality, and that attachment which ought to prevail among beings of the ſame ſpecies. The enlightened ſtate of the preſent age no longer permits you to be ignorant of this ſacred duty. Forget not the immenſe obligations you yourſelves are under

under to ſome truths, which were unknown to your anceſtors. You are indebted to them for the rapid progreſs you have made in the mathematical ſciences, and the uſeful arts.

The improvement of the rational faculties has an influence on human happineſs, which the moſt refined ſophiſtry cannot deſtroy. Knowledge afterwards is ſuſceptible only of increaſe; and man becomes happier and better in proportion as he is enlightened: for what ſyſtem is more falſe or dangerous, than that which is founded upon a contrary principle? Can it be denied, that a proper education, given with care to ſome young Melegaches, who might be ſent back to their own country when they had acquired a perfect knowledge of our induſtry and manufactures, would be of great ſervice to that extenſive iſland? But that this ſervice might be complete, theſe young iſlanders ought to

be preſerved from catching that frivolous turn of mind which is ſo deſtructive to ſociety in Europe, and eſpecially in France. Care ought to be taken, above all, that they ſhould not carry to their iſland the ſeeds of this pernicious ſcourge, which checks every kind of uſeful induſtry, and diffuſes inexpreſſible evils throughout whole nations. It is in large capitals, particularly, that this ſcourge is felt. Millions of people periſh in the country through wretchedneſs and hard labour, while the rich affix a value only to agreeable talents, and arts of luxury. That exceſſive fondneſs which the great ſhew for things of no uſe, and which are often very pernicious, is ſo common, that it makes very little impreſſion upon us. What then do the Europeans poſſeſs of ſuch value, that they take the liberty to deſpiſe all the reſt of mankind? If we conſider our manners and our laws, we ſhall find that we have as yet

ſcarcely emerged from barbarity; and the moſt enlightened men cannot foreſee the epoch when the wiſeſt of nations will be delivered from thoſe ridiculous prejudices, which check uſeful induſtry, and give an importance only to objects that are deſtructive, or at leaſt of no utility.

The natives of Madagaſcar are called *Malegaches*, or *Madecaſſes*. They are portly in their perſons, and riſe above the middle ſtature. The colour of their ſkin is different: among one tribe it is of a deep black, and among another tawny: ſome have a copper-coloured tint; but the colour of the greater part is olive.

All thoſe who are black have woolly hair, like the negroes on the coaſt of Africa. Thoſe who are of a complexion ſimilar to that of the Indians, and Mulattoes, have as lank hair as the Europeans. Their noſe is not flat; they have a broad open forehead;

their lips are thin; and their features are regular and agreeable. Theſe people generally diſplay in their countenance a peculiar character of frankneſs and good-nature. They never ſhew any deſire of learning but things which relate to the ſimpleſt wants of mankind; and this deſire is always extremely moderate: they are very indifferent reſpecting knowledge which cannot be obtained without reflection. A natural want of care, and a general apathy renders every thing inſupportable to them that requires attention. Sober, light and active, they ſpend the greater part of their lives in ſleeping, and in amuſing themſelves.

The Malegache, like the ſavage, is deſtitute both of virtue and vice. To him the preſent is every thing; he is ſuſceptible of no kind of foreſight; and he does not even conceive that there are men on the earth who give themſelves uneaſineſs reſpecting futu-

rity. Theſe iſlanders are free beings, who enjoy peace of mind, and health of body. Man is ſo organized, that, whether owing to moral or phyſical cauſes, he who has the misfortune to think of himſelf is almoſt always in a ſtate of illneſs. Indeed, when men have a good conſtitution, they affix little value to the advantage they enjoy, in that reſpect, over almoſt all their fellow creatures. Our evils, if I may ſay ſo, are in ourſelves, and our pleaſures in thoſe objects which procure them to us. Man is a humane, feeling, and compaſſionate being; and it is our conſtitution which irreſiſtibly leads us to aſſiſt thoſe whom we ſee ſuffering. It is that ſalutary organization which, extinguiſhing, as one may ſay, ſelf-intereſt in each individual, ſupplies among people who live in a ſtate of nature the want of laws and of virtues. It is that which prevents the robuſt ſavage from robbing child-

hood,

hood, or feeble old age, of its ſubſiſtence, even when he is obliged to expoſe himſelf to danger and fatigue, in order to procure wherewithal to ſatisfy his hunger. In ſhort, it is to this noble organization that the ſavage is indebted for that averſion which he has to hurt his own ſpecies; and this natural and involuntary ſentiment luckily does not depend on the principles of education.

The Malegache, as well as the ſavage, is abſolute maſter of himſelf; his freedom is confined by no check or reſtraint; he goes wherever he thinks proper, acts as he chooſes, and does what he pleaſes, except what may hurt a fellow-creature. It never entered the mind of a Malegache to attempt to domineer over the thoughts or actions of any one: each individual has his own peculiar manner of living; and his neighbour never diſturbs him, nor even thinks of attempting it. In this reſpect theſe iſlanders

are much wiſer than the Europeans, who have the cruel madneſs to wiſh that all the people of the earth would conform to their cuſtoms, opinions, and even prejudices.

Are ſavages then ſo much to be pitied? Do we find many of them diſcontented with their condition? Does it become us to deſpiſe the ſtate of nature? Are we not ſurrounded by men, who, tired of exiſtence, deteſt it, and ſeek to deprive themſelves of it?

The ſavage confines his wants and deſires to the procuring of what is abſolutely neceſſary for his ſubſiſtence. He enjoys in peace the gifts of nature, and endures with ſilence thoſe evils which are inſeparable from humanity.

The conduct of man in a ſtate of civilization is not ſo reaſonable. Idleneſs and opulence hurry him on to thoſe vain and falſe enjoyments which, in the end, bring upon him

him new infirmities; while unreſtrained paſſions, and a taſte for the moſt frivolous things, make him continually deviate from the path that leads to happineſs. He who ſeeks it never finds it. Happineſs exiſts, and can exiſt only in ourſelves, and in the good uſe which we make of our reaſon.

Were the ſavages as unhappy as we ſuppoſe, becauſe they are not acquainted with, or deſpiſe, all thoſe ſuperfluities upon which we ſet ſo much value, why do they refuſe to adopt our manners, our cuſtoms, and our laws?

"Vander Stel, governor of the Cape of "Good Hope, having procured a Hottentot "child, cauſed him to be educated accord-"ing to the manners and cuſtoms of Eu-"rope. Fine clothes were given to him; he "was taught ſeveral languages; and his "progreſs fully correſponded with the "care taken of his education. Vander Stel,

" entertaining great hopes of his talents, " ſent him to India under the protection of " a commiſſary general, who employed him " with advantage in the company's affairs. " After the death of the commiſſary, this " Hottentot returned to the Cape. A few " days after, while on a viſit to ſome Hotten- " tots, his relations, he formed a reſolution " of pulling off his European dreſs, in " order to clothe himſelf with a ſheep's ſkin. " He then repaired to Vander Stel, in this " new attire, carrying a bundle containing " his old clothes, and, preſenting them to " the governor, addreſſed him as follows: " 'Be ſo kind, ſir, as to obſerve, that I for " ever renounce theſe clothes; I am deter- " mined to live and to die in the religion, " manners, and cuſtoms of my anceſtors. " The only favour I have to beg of you is, " that you will ſuffer me to keep the neck- " lace and cutlaſs which I now wear.'—Hav-

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" ing delivered this ſpeech, he immediately " betook himſelf to flight, without waiting " for the governor's anſwer, and was never " afterwards ſeen at the Cape*."

Such examples are not uncommon: I could mention ſeveral of the ſame kind among the Madecaſſes.

The inhabitants of Madagaſcar are divided into a great number of tribes. It is ſuppoſed that the population of this iſland may amount to four millions. This evaluation, however, is by far too great; and it is impoſſible to aſcertain the truth on this point, in the preſent ſtate of the iſland, which is divided into a great number of ſocieties, all diſtinct one from the other: each ſociety inhabits that canton which it finds moſt convenient, and governs itſelf according to its own uſages. A tribe is compoſed of ſeveral villages, who have all a particular

* *Hiſtoire des Voyages*, tom. v.

chief. This chief is ſometimes elected, but for the moſt part ſucceeds by hereditary right. The lands are not divided: they belong to thoſe who take the trouble to till them. Theſe iſlanders are not acquainted either with locks or bolts, and live in a very frugal manner. Hunger regulates their hours of repaſt. It is, however, common to ſee them dine at ten in the morning, and ſup at four in the afternoon. Their food conſiſts of very white rice, exceedingly light, and well boiled, which they beſprinkle with a ſucculent kind of ſoup, made from fiſh or fleſh, and ſeaſoned with pimento, ginger, ſaffron, and a few aromatic herbs. This ſimple diſh is ſerved up in the leaves of the *ravem*, which are uſed for plates, diſhes, and ſpoons. Theſe veſſels are always clean, and are renewed at each repaſt.

The Malegaches have two methods only of preparing their food. They either boil

it

it in earthen veſſels of an excellent quality, which they manufacture with great ingenuity, and which they call *panelles*, or they broil it upon the coals.

They catch with much dexterity a great number of birds unknown in Europe, which are as much ſought after by naturaliſts, on account of the beauty of their plumage, as they are eſteemed by travellers, on account of their exquiſite taſte.

The pheaſant, the partridge, the quail, the pintado, or Guinea fowl, the wild duck, teals of five or ſix different kinds, the black paroquet, the ſpoon-bill, the turtle dove, the black-bird, the green wood-pigeon, pigeons and paroquets of various colours, together with a kind of bat of a monſtrous ſize, afford excellent and delicate nouriſhment to the Europeans. It was not without a conſiderable degree of reluctance, that I firſt ate the bats of Madagaſcar, dreſſed after the

the manner of a fricaſeed chicken. Theſe animals are ſo hideous, that the very ſight of them frightens our ſailors; yet when one can overcome that diſguſt which is inſpired only by the idea of their figure, their fleſh is found to be much more palatable than that of our beſt fowls.

The Malegaches catch immenſe quantities both of ſea and freſh-water fiſh.

The dorado, breams of different kinds, ſoles, pilchards, much larger, but not ſo good or ſo fat as ours, herrings, mackarel, oyſters, muſcles, crabs, and turtle, furniſh food in abundance to the iſlanders who live on the borders of the ſea. The rivers alſo ſupply them with very fine eels, and freſh water mullets, in taſte and excellence preferable to ſea mullets. On theſe coaſts there are a great many kinds of fiſh, which one muſt not eat without trying whether they are poiſonous, by putting a piece of ſilver under

their

their tongue. If the piece of ſilver loſes its colour, and becomes black, thoſe who ſhould eat them would experience the moſt fatal ſymptoms, and be expoſed to great danger. Several of the people belonging to admiral Boſcawen's ſquadron loſt their lives at Rodriguez, by not taking this uſeful precaution.

The French have frequented only the eaſtern coaſt of Madagaſcar. The province of Carnaſſi, in which Fort Dauphine ſtands, is well known to them, and alſo a part of thoſe where Foulepointe, the bay of Antongil, and the iſland of Noſſi Hybrahim, are ſituated.

OF THE SOUTHERN PART OF MADAGASCAR.

THAT part of Madagaſcar where Fort Dauphine is ſituated, is very populous.

lous. Almoſt all the villages are built upon eminences; they are ſurrounded by two rows of ſtrong paliſades; and within theſe there is a parapet of earth four feet in height. Large bamboos, placed at the diſtance of five feet from each other, and ſunk to a conſiderable depth in the ground, ſerve to ſtrengthen the paliſades: but ſome of theſe villages are fortified alſo by a ditch ten feet in breadth, and ſix in depth.

The place where the chief reſides is called *Donac:* it contains two or three buildings ſurrounded by a peculiar kind of incloſure, were the chief lives with his women and his children.

The chiefs always go armed with a fuſee, and a ſtick headed with iron, to the other extremity of which is affixed a ſmall bunch of cow's hair: they cover their heads with a cap made of red woollen cloth. It is l[illegible] their caps, above all, that they can be d[illegible] tinguiſh[illegible]

tinguiſhed by their ſubjects. The authority of theſe chiefs is very much limited; yet in the province of Carcanoſſi they are ſuppoſed to be the proprietors of all the land, which they diſtribute among their ſubjects, in order to be tilled and cultivated. For this they require a ſmall quit-rent, which, in the language of the country, is called *faenſa*.

The people of the province of Carcanoſſi are not entirely ignorant of the art of writing. They have even ſome hiſtorical books in the Madecaſſe language: but their learned men, whom they call *Ombiaſſes*, uſe only the Arabic characters. They have among them treatiſes on medicine, geomancy, and judicial aſtrology. Theſe Ombiaſſes are both ſorcerers and phyſicians. The moſt celebrated come from the province of Matatane, in which country magic is preſerved in its full glory. The Matatanes are dreaded by the other natives of the iſland, becauſe they excel

excel in this art of deception. The Ombiaſſes profeſs, in the public ſchools, geomancy and aſtrology. The art of writing has, doubtleſs, been brought into this iſland by the Arabs, who made a conqueſt of it about three hundred years ago. Their paper is made in the valley of Amboule: it is manufactured from the *Papyrus nilotica*, which the Madecaſſes name *Sanga-Sanga*. They pull off with great dexterity the inner bark of this tree; divide it into very thin filaments, which they moiſten with water; and having laid them acroſs each other, in various directions, preſs them well down. They are then boiled in a ſtrong lye of aſhes, and afterwards pounded in a large wooden mortar till they are reduced to a paſte. This paſte is waſhed and drenched with water upon a frame made of bamboos, in the form of a grate. When this operation is finiſhed, the leaves are ſpread out

to

to dry in the ſun, and are glazed with a decoction of rice water, called, in the Malegache language, *ranou pan.* This paper is of a yellowiſh colour; but when it is well glazed, it does not imbibe the ink. The pens uſed by theſe iſlanders are made of the bamboo.

Their ink is made from a decoction in boiling water of the bark of a tree which they call *arandrato.* This ink is not quite ſo black as ours, but it is naturally more ſhining.

The Arabic language has made ſome progreſs in the north-weſt part of the iſland of Madagaſcar. It is well known that the Arab princes formed large eſtabliſhments along the African coaſt, which, according to geographers, correſpond with the kingdoms of Monomotapa and Mono-Emugi. They took poſſeſſion alſo of the iſland of Comora; and theſe princes, when they emigrated to Africa and the adjacent iſles,

did not forget their ancient country. They ſtill indeed carry on an inconſiderable trade with Aden, Maſcate and the coaſts of Abyſſinia. They have alſo on the ſmall river of Bombetoc, in Madagaſcar, a kind of ſettlement, which enables them to viſit different parts of that iſland, for the purpoſes of commerce. By theſe means they have introduced their language, and left ſome traces of Mahometaniſm among the Malegaches. Formerly, there ſubſiſted between the Arabs and the Portugueſe of India a hatred and animoſity, which were founded ſolely on the zeal theſe two nations entertained for their religion. The Arabs of Comora and Madagaſcar made frequent attacks upon the Portugueſe eſtabliſhments on the coaſt of Africa, which did them great injury: they even deſtroyed ſome of their ſettlements: but this hatred became gradually extinguiſhed, when the decline of the

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Portugueſe power rendered them leſs the objects of jealouſy. An attempt was made at Goa, about twenty years ago, to take advantage of this ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, in order to form a Portugueſe ſettlement at Cape St. Sebaſtian, in Madagaſcar. The intention of this eſtabliſhment was merely religious. The Portugueſe thought of forming a miſſion, rather than a factory; but this project was not attended with ſucceſs. M. Boſſe, an inhabitant of the iſle of Bourbon, ſaw the melancholy remains of this eſtabliſhment.

It is ſurpriſing that Mahometaniſm has not made greater progreſs in this iſland, which has been ſo much frequented by the Arabs. However, if we except circumciſion, abſtinence from pork, and ſome few trifling practices, which have very little influence over the conduct of theſe people, the deſcendants of the Arabs themſelves have

loſt ſight of the fundamental parts of their religious opinions. They do not believe in a future exiſtence; like the Manichees, they admit of two principles, one ſupremely good, and the other extremely wicked. They never addreſs their prayers to the former; but they entertain a great dread of the latter. They are continually doing homage and offering up ſacrifices to him.

The iſland of Madagaſcar is ſo near to the coaſt of Africa, that it is natural to ſuppoſe that it muſt have been peopled from that vaſt continent: but at preſent the different races are ſo intermixed, that it would be vain to attempt to deſcribe all the varieties of them.

One can, however, in this iſland diſtinguiſh the race of real negroes; but it is a matter of more difficulty to diſtinguiſh thoſe who are deſcended from the whites.

The whites, who inhabit the province of

Anoſſi

Anoſſi and Carcanoſſi, pretend to be deſcended from Imina, the mother of Mahomet. They have aſſumed the name of Zafferahimini. The whites, who inhabit Foulepointe, Noſſi-Hibrahim, and the bay of Antongil, are ſprung, ſome from the pirates, and others from the Jews: for this reaſon, they call themſelves Zoffe-Hibrahim, that is to ſay, the deſcendants of Abraham. Beſides theſe, there is a third kind of whites, who ſay they were ſent to Madagaſcar by the Caliph of Mecca, to inſtruct the Malegaches in the ſecrets of nature, and the religion of Mahomet. Theſe impoſtors ſeized upon the province of Matatane, after they had expelled and maſſacred the Zafferahimini, who governed that diſtrict. They are called Zaffi-Caſimambou. Their complexion is darker than that of the other whites, and their profeſſion is to teach to read and write the Arabic language.

The Zafferahimini, in the province of Anoſſi and Carcanoſſi, believe that they came originally from the ſandy plains on the borders of Mecca. On this account they are called *Ontampaſſeraca*, and are divided into three claſſes, the Rhoandrians, the Anacandrians, and the Ontzatſi. The firſt and moſt honourable claſs, is that of the Rhoandrians. People of this claſs have aſſumed to themſelves the privilege of killing animals. Among ſavages, and people who ſubſiſt by hunting, the trade of a butcher is almoſt always held in great diſtinction. The Rhoandrians are the nobility of the country; and it is always from this claſs that the ſovereign is choſen.

The Anacandrians are deſcended from the Rhoandrians, and a woman of an inferior claſs. For this reaſon, they ſhare with the Rhoandrians the honour and advantage of killing, for the other iſlanders, ſuch

ſuch animals as are neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence.

The Ontzatſi are the laſt claſs of the Ontampaſſemaca; but they enjoy no particular marks of diſtinction. They are generally brave ſoldiers, ſkilled in the art of war, who can throw a ſtone or an aſſagay with great dexterity, and who ſpend their time in dancing, ſleeping, and amuſing themſelves. They learn from their earlieſt infancy ſome ſongs, containing leſſons of morality, or fables reſpecting their origin.

The native blacks are divided into four claſſes: the Voadziri, the Lohavohits, the Ontzoa, and the Endeves.

The Voadziri, we are aſſured, are the deſcendants of the ancient ſovereigns of the iſland. They are generally pretty rich in ſlaves and flocks; and they are allowed to poſſeſs ſeveral villages. Theſe people muſt be held in great conſideration among the

iſlanders of Madagaſcar, for they have preſerved, notwithſtanding the deſpotiſm of the Arabs, who conquered the province of Anoſſi, the right of killing, when they are not in the preſence of a Rhoandrian or an Anacandrian, ſuch animals as belong to their ſubjects. The Lohavohits are much leſs powerful than the Voadziri. They can never poſſeſs more than one village; and, however rich they may be in flocks, they muſt always ſend for a Rhoandrian or an Anacandrian, to kill thoſe animals which they and their ſubjects uſe as food.

The caſte of the Ontzoa comes immediately after that of the Lohavohits, to whom they are nearly related; but they have no kind of authority or privilege. The Ondeves are ſlaves by extraction. In the Malegache language that word ſignifies *a loſt man.*

The Malegaches preſerve, reſpecting their origin,

origin, a fable which correſponds extremely well with the ſubdiviſion I have given of theſe different caſtes.

Such of theſe iſlanders as have any erudition relate, that the Creator of heaven and earth formed, from the body of the firſt man whilſt he was aſleep, ſeven women. Theſe were the mothers of the different caſtes.

The caſte of the Rhoandrians are the offspring of the firſt man and the woman formed from his brain. The mother of the Anacandrians, and that of the Ontzatſi, had not ſo noble an origin. The one was formed from his neck; and the other from the left ſhoulder.

The caſte of the Voadziri proceed from the firſt man and the woman formed out of his right ſide.

The mother of the Lohavohits and the Ontzoa came from the thigh and the calf of

the leg; but the extraction of the Ondeves is ſtill meaner. They are ſaid to be deſcended from the ſoles of the feet.

It is doubtleſs a ſubject of melancholy reflection to find amongſt the people who inhabit the large province of Anoſſi ſo ridiculous fables reſpecting the inequality of their condition. What a deplorable abſurdity for ſavages to refuſe being brethren, and to diſdain a common origin! The explanation of this kind of phenomenon can be found only in the conqueſt which the Arabs, the anceſtors of the Rhoandrians, made of Madagaſcar. This foreign race have left, wherever they were diſperſed, the moſt lamentable traces of ſuperſtition. The Rhoandrians are reduced at preſent to a family of about twenty perſons. None of them are to be found but in the province of Anoſſi; and there is reaſon to hope that the iſland will at length be delivered from

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the government and yoke of theſe conquerors, who have laid it waſte, and infected it with Mahometan practices.

The Malegaches ſubmit to the Rhoandrians only as free ſubjects. They change their chiefs at pleaſure; and they can attach themſelves to any one whom they think capable of ſecuring to them happineſs and tranquillity. Theſe iſlanders are too brave to crouch under a burthenſome yoke; but their extreme credulity is, without doubt, very prejudicial to their liberty, and to the ſucceſs of their enterpriſes.

How is it poſſible that theſe people, involved in the darkneſs of ignorance, can defend themſelves againſt the deception of the Ombiaſſes, when the moſt enlightened nations are ſtill every day dupes to quacks and impoſtors? It would appear as if it were neceſſary that man ſhould ſuffer himſelf to be ſubjected by chimeras. Reaſon is ſeldom

ever ſo powerful as to preſerve him entirely from that fondneſs for the marvellous which often hurries him into the moſt ridiculous illuſions; and if in civiliſed nations he ſometimes artfully conceals this fatal propenſity, it is only becauſe he is aſhamed of his weakneſs.

The Malegaches of the province of Anoſſi are lively, ſenſible, and grateful: they are far from being deſtitute of intelligence or capacity. Theſe iſlanders are paſſionately fond of women; and when in their company never appear ſad, or dejected. Their principal attention is to pleaſe the fair ſex, who, in this country more than in any other, meet with that reſpect and deference which are ſo neceſſary to the happineſs of ſociety. Man here never commands as a deſpot; nor does the woman ever obey as a ſlave. The balance of power inclines even in favour of the women. Their empire is

that

that of beauty, mildneſs, and the graces: for, colour excepted, the Malegache women are handſome. Their perſons are ſlender and genteel; they have pleaſing and delicate features; a ſoft ſmooth ſkin; teeth remarkably white; and fine blue eyes, the pupils of which are brown and ſparkling.

A plurality of wives is not uncommon here among the chiefs, and thoſe who are rich; but they never eſpouſe more than one legally: the reſt are conſidered as concubines. This practice is not attended with diſagreeable conſequences in Madagaſcar; for all theſe women live in harmony together. Beſides, a divorce may take place as often as the conjugal union diſpleaſes either the huſband or the wife. When they part, however, by mutual conſent, they reſtore to each other the property they poſſeſſed before marriage. In Madagaſcar adultery is looked upon as a robbery, and as ſuch is

puniſhed.

puniſhed. Theſe people, therefore, pay the utmoſt reſpect to marriage; they forewarn ſtrangers to behave with decency to their wives; but they offer them their daughters, and think themſelves much honoured when they have children by them. Married women may be known by their hair, which is ſeparated into treſſes, and bound up in the form of a noſegay on the top of the head. Young women ſuffer it to fall careleſsly over their ſhoulders. Huſbands are always in high ſpirits when with their wives; their preſence inſpires them with joy; as ſoon as they perceive them, they begin to dance and to ſing; and they continually repeat that they ſooth the cares of life. The Malegache women appear to be happy, and are generally in good humour. Their lively, cheerful and equal temper is peculiarly pleaſing to the Europeans.

While the Malegaches are at war, their women

women ſing and dance inceſſantly, throughout the whole day, and even during a part of the night. They imagine that theſe continual dances animate their huſbands, and increaſe their vigour and courage. They ſcarcely allow themſelves time to enjoy their meals. When the war is ended, they aſſemble, at ſunſet, and renew their ſinging and dancing, which always begin with much noiſe, and the ſound of various inſtruments. Their ſongs are either panegyrics or ſatires; and appeared to me to intereſt the ſpectators very much. Such ſports are a kind of uſeful leſſons, in which glorious deeds are celebrated, and contemptible actions ridiculed. As ſoon as a woman perceives that her health betrays any ſigns of having had familiar intercourſe with the Europeans, ſhe abſents herſelf from thoſe joyful aſſemblies, in order to avoid the cutting raillery of her companions, and to put herſelf under the

care

care of the phyſicians or Ombiaſſes. This cuſtom prevents the venereal diſeaſe from ſpreading ſo much in this iſland as it has ſpread in Europe. Beſides, the Ombiaſſes have found out a remedy for this diſorder, which is ſaid to be extremely efficacious. I do not recollect the name of the plant which they uſe; but I know that its leaves reſemble thoſe of the phyllyrea. Theſe phyſicians order the patient to chew and ſwallow it, lying alternately on the back and belly, in a horizontal poſition. The patient muſt not be loaded with clothes; and in order that perſpiration may not be impeded, ſhe muſt be ſurrounded, on all ſides, with a ſtrong briſk fire, during the whole time that the remedy acts. The virus of the diſeaſe generally accumulates in the ſoles of the feet; and the abſceſs there formed is ſeldom attended with diſagreeable conſequences. Great care is taken that the heat

of

of the fire may not be too diſagreeable to the patient. Theſe ſavage people thus know how to deliver themſelves happily, and in leſs time than we, from that ſcourge which we introduced amongſt them, and which in Europe occaſions ſo much devaſtation.

Moſt travellers, inſtead of lamenting that the ſavages ever became acquainted with the Europeans, ſeem to take delight in throwing out every kind of invective againſt them. It is thus that they have almoſt always rewarded them for the hoſpitality which they ſo generouſly and diſintereſtedly ſhewed towards us. If you read Flacourt*, you will imagine that the Malegaches

* He was director-general of the French Eaſt-India Company, and in 1648 had the management of an expedition in the iſland of Madagaſcar, which, like all the preceding, proved unſucceſsful. This expedition, however, procured a very minute account of the iſland, which Flacourt was enabled to give, from having reſided

ches are the moſt perverſe, the moſt deceitful, and the moſt fawning of mankind. He does not heſitate to aſſert, that among theſe iſlanders treachery and revenge are accounted virtues; compaſſion and gratitude weakneſſes. Such abſurd declamation, however, can impoſe only on thoſe who have not ſtudied, with Rouſſeau, man in his primitive ſtate. Can he indeed, who follows without reſtraint the dictates of nature, be corrupt and wicked? When man, in a civilized ſtate, is hurried on by the impetuoſity of paſſion, his deſires, rather inflamed than ſatisfied, plunge him into an abyſs, from which all the power of reaſon cannot deliver him. But the ſavage, when in his pleaſures he follows the impulſe of his ſenſes, experiences nothing of the like

fided in it ten years. It was printed at Paris, in one volume quarto, with figures deſigned and engraven by the author, and was dedicated to the ſubintendant Fouquét, who had the principal ſhare in the company then formed for carrying on a trade to the Eaſt Indies. T.

kind.

kind. In all countries where men are free, and where inequality of condition is known only by a few faint ſhades, the riches of individuals are that of the ſoil, and the ſoil is the property of all in common. Whatever travellers may ſay, bad morals are not found but in a ſtate of civilization. The difficulty of gratifying his appetites leads man aſide from the path which nature has traced out for him; bad education, pernicious examples, a variety of intereſts, frivolous taſtes, and fictitious wants degrade, in our eyes, human nature ſo far as to make ſome metaphyſicians believe, that we are all born with a ſecret propenſity to vice. Man, naturally, ſays Hobbes, is a wicked being. Let us baniſh ſuch a diſagreeable idea; and let us, in our fellow-creatures, ſee good and benevolent beings. I have ſtudied with ſome care the character and cuſtoms of the iſlanders of Madagaſcar; I have ſeveral times aſſiſted

at their aſſemblies when they were deliberating upon important affairs; I have followed them in their dances, their ſports and their amuſements; and I have always found among them that prudent reſerve which ſecures them from thoſe fatal exceſſes, and thoſe vices, ſo common among poliſhed nations. I was, indeed, then ſo young that my obſervations cannot have much weight; but, if my experience is not ſufficient to inſpire confidence, I beg the reader to ſtudy the nature of things, more than the relations of ignorant and unprincipled men, who think they have a right to exerciſe the moſt deſpotic ſway over the inhabitants of a foreign land.

If the Malegaches have ſometimes employed treachery, they were forced to it by the tyranny of the Europeans. The weak have no other arms to protect them from the attacks of the ſtrong. Can theſe people

defend

defend themſelves by any other means againſt our bayonets and artillery? They are deſtitute of knowledge and reſources; yet we take advantage of their weakneſs to make them yield to our caprices: they receive the moſt rigorous treatment in return for the hoſpitality which they have ſo generouſly ſhewn to us; and we call them traitors and cowards, when we force them to break the yoke with which it has pleaſed us to load them.

Theſe melancholy truths are too well proved, by the ruin of the different eſtabliſhments which the Europeans have attempted to form in Madagaſcar.

In 1642, Captain Picault obtained for himſelf and aſſociates the excluſive privilege of trading to Madagaſcar; and at the ſame epoch a grant of the iſland was given to a powerful company, by letters patent from the crown.

One Pronis therefore was commiſſioned to take poſſeſſion of Madagaſcar in the name of the king, with orders to form an eſtabliſhment in ſome fertile ſpot, which might be ſuſceptible of defence, and of an eaſy and ſafe acceſs. In conſequence of theſe orders, he made choice of the village of Manghefia, which is ſituated at the extremity of the province of Carcanoſſi, in the latitude of 24° 30'. This place appeared to him as likely to anſwer the propoſed end in every reſpect. The numerous herds of horned cattle which frequented this part of the country, and its rich fields of rice and potatoes, ſuffered no uneaſineſs to remain in his mind reſpecting proviſions. A navigable river, which takes its riſe at the bottom of mount Siliva, waters meadows of an immenſe extent in the neighbourhood; timber of all kinds fit for building houſes, or conſtructing ſhips, may be found in abundance cloſe to commodious

modious docks; and the harbour is perfectly ſheltered from the ſea winds by the ſmall iſland of St. Lucia.

Scarcely had Pronis eſtabliſhed himſelf at Manghefia, when Captain Reſimont brought him ſeventy people from France, to reinforce his ſmall colony. But the unwholeſomeneſs of the climate in the ſpace of a month deſtroyed one third of the whole. Pronis being then obliged to abandon this firſt eſtabliſhment, notwithſtanding its advantageous ſituation, retired precipitately with the remains of his colony to the peninſula of Tholangar, the air of which is more ſalubrious.

This peninſula, which is ſituated in the twenty-fifth degree of latitude, increaſes inſenſibly in breadth, and might eaſily be ſecured from any attack of the iſlanders by redoubts and paliſades. The fort built here, the elevation of which above the ſea is an

hundred and fifty feet, commands the harbour, ſo that an enemy at anchor would not long be able to withſtand the fire of its batteries. A bold ſhore ſurrounded with breakers renders it very difficult to land here; and acceſs to the fort would be impracticable, were it ſtrengthened by ſome additional works. This fort, called Fort Dauphin, is of an oblong figure, and is ſurrounded with good walls built of lime and ſand, covered with ſtrong cement: it was thought needleſs to encloſe it on the ſide towards the harbour. The anchoring ground is excellent; a ſhip here would ſooner break her cables than drive on her anchors; but the ſea winds, and above all the frequent and ſtrong north-eaſt breezes, are very troubleſome to ſhips moored in this port, the entrance of which is bounded on the ſouth by Cape Ravenate, and on the north by the point of Itapera. The beautiful river of

Fanſhere,

Fanſhere, which has its ſource at the bottom of the mountains of Manghabey, runs into the ſea two leagues from Fort Dauphin, and very near to Cape Ravenate. This river ſupplies water to a large lake, which the iſlanders call the lake of Amboule. It is ten thouſand fathoms in circumference, and its mean depth is about forty feet.

The lake of Amboule would form an excellent harbour, were not the channel by which it communicates with the ſea often ſhut up by ſhifting ſands.

There are certain times when large veſſels might eaſily be carried into this baſin: but ſuch opportunities are rare. Before theſe occaſions can happen, the river, by a ſudden ſwell, muſt have waſhed away the bar of ſand which the winds and the waves are every day accumulating at its mouth, and which is formed in that ſpot where the current of the water is in equilibrio with the force

force of the tide. It is not, however, impoſſible to open that paſſage, and to clear away the ſand-bank which prevents ſhips from entering this excellent harbour.

To effect this, the hulls of ſome old veſſels laden with ballaſt ought to be ſunk at certain diſtances, and in a direction which local obſervations made with great care could alone point out. Theſe incumbrances would ſerve as ſo many foundations to a new ſand-bank, which would be formed from the quantities daily waſhed in by the ſea. After this preliminary operation was finiſhed, it would be neceſſary to wait ſome time, until the ſand-bank was pretty well conſolidated to withſtand the force of the river, which, when increaſed in ſtrength and quantity, might produce the effect of a large ſluice. The bank employed to withſtand the current being conſtructed in ſuch a manner as to break of itſelf, the violence of the ſtream would

would not fail to cleanſe the mouth of the river, and to render the entrance of the lake practicable.

Every method employed to make moles in the ſea might be attended with advantage in accompliſhing the object here propoſed. If I have given the preference to that of uſing the hulls of old ſhips, it is becauſe it appears to me to be the moſt commodious, the moſt expeditious, and the leaſt expenſive. Beſides, an experiment of this nature could not fail of being uſeful and inſtructive, whatever might be its ſucceſs. Veſſels, when ſunk, are maſſes ſo enormous and ſolid, on account of the care taken to bind all their parts together, that I do not think it poſſible to ſubſtitute for them, in moles, and works deſtined to withſtand the fury of the ſea, any other bodies more capable of reſiſting the violence of the waves. The river Fanſhere is navigable for boats to the

the diſtance of from fifteen to twenty leagues from its mouth. The labour neceſſary to bring the navigation of this river to perfection would be very inconſiderable.

The point of Itapera, which is to the north of Fort Dauphin, encloſes, on the ſouthern ſide, the great bay of Loucar. The iſland of St. Clair ſhelters it from the ſea winds, and prevents the ſmall river of Itapera from being choked up with ſand, like that of Fanſhere.

The port is on the leeward ſide of the iſland; but the anchoring ground here is little frequented by navigators, becauſe the bay of Loucar abounds with ſhoals and quickſands.

The peninſula of Tholangar was ſo much the more favourable to the eſtabliſhment of Pronis, as the rich and fertile valley of Amboule, and the proximity of ſeveral navigable rivers, freed him from all uneaſineſs reſpecting

reſpecting the means of ſubſiſting. Mines of iron and ſteel of an excellent quality, hemp, reſinous gums, pitch and tar, and timber fit for building houſes, or conſtructing ſhips, all found here in abundance, were advantages which a wiſe and enlightened adminiſtration would not have ſuffered themſelves to neglect. Pronis, however, was a man deſtitute of talents and induſtry. The indolence in which he lived, as well as the Frenchmen under his command, involved the colony in all thoſe diſorders which an imprudent conduct uſually produces. Licentiouſneſs was ſucceeded by a ſpirit of revolt; and thoſe who owed ſubmiſſion and obedience to their chief ſoon put him in irons. In this ſtate of captivity, he continued ſix months. When releaſed from his impriſonment, by a veſſel which had arrived from France, with ſuch proviſions as he ſtood moſt in need of, he rendered himſelf

guilty

guilty of a new crime, by publicly ſelling to Vander Meſter, the governor of Mauritius, at preſent called the Iſle of France, all the unfortunate Malegaches who were in the ſervice of the eſtabliſhment. What raiſed the indignation of the iſlanders to the higheſt pitch upon this occaſion was, that there were amongſt theſe ſlaves ſixteen women of the race of the Lohavohits.

When the company were informed of this ſhameful conduct, they deprived Pronis of his commiſſion. Flacourt was choſen to ſucceed him; but he did not arrive at Fort Dauphin till towards the end of December 1648. As he has publiſhed a minute account of every thing which took place under his adminiſtration, I ſhall not here trace out a picture of the cruelty, injuſtice, and oppreſſion, which that governor exerciſed towards the unfortunate iſlanders. In 1661 he ſent forty Frenchmen, followed

by a body of armed blacks, to burn and ravage the fertile country of Fanſhere. The manner in which Flacourt violated that hoſpitality which had been ſo generouſly ſhewn to him, cannot be defended in an enlightened age. I am inclined to believe, that every man, hereafter, who has the leaſt regard for virtue or humanity, will fly from foreign lands, and renounce every commercial advantage, rather than imitate the barbarous conduct of this governor. Inſtead of making ſavage nations wear our chains, let us impart to them our ſciences, and our knowledge. People ſunk in the darkneſs of ignorance, and intimidated by the ſuperiority of our arms, cannot certainly avoid the yoke which we are pleaſed to lay upon them: but what right is more iniquitous than that of force? And how dare we at preſent accuſe ſavage nations of treachery, when, haraſſed by our tyranny, they

have

have only attempted to avenge themſelves for our ſeverity? If Flacourt knew better than Pronis how to enforce obedience from the French under his command, he did not, however, ſhew that he was much better acquainted with the principles of the laws of nature: he was unjuſt and cruel towards a people, who being the proprietors of the country, ought to have given laws to him, inſtead of receiving them. But let us leave *Flacourt's Hiſtory* to thoſe who may have courage to read it; and let us ſee whether his ſucceſſors were leſs inhuman.

Fort Dauphin was burnt in 1655, and was not rebuilt till the year 1663. Chamargou, who was then governor, ſent La Caſe to explore that part of the iſland which lies to the north of the country of the Matatanès. This commiſſion La Caſe executed with much intelligence. It may not be here improper to give ſome account of the character

racter of this man, whose memory is still celebrated among these people. La Case was only a fictitious name; that of his family was Le Vacher; and he was born at Rochelle. On his arrival at Fort Dauphin, the French were held in no kind of estimation among the islanders. After great expences, that establishment was in a state of the most deplorable decline. La Case, however, undertook to revive the consequence of the French nation; and in this he succeeded. By a great number of victories he acquired the surname of *Dian Pouffe*; and no greater honour could have been conferred upon him by the Malegaches: for *Dian Pouffe* is the name of a chief who formerly conquered the island, and who is even yet held in great veneration among these people.

The French, alone, withheld from La Case that justice which was due to his valour and good conduct. The governor of

Fort Dauphin, jealous of the glory he had acquired, by executing, in an able manner, thoſe difficult commiſſions which had been aſſigned to him, refuſed either to reward or to promote him. The ſovereign of the province of Amboule, named Dian-Raſſitate, took advantage of the juſt reſentment of La Caſe, and invited him to enter into his ſervice. Five Frenchmen accompanied him, and abandoned Fort Dauphin. Dian-Nong, Dian-Raſſitate's daughter, having conceived a violent affection for La Caſe, offered him her hand with the conſent of her father; and this chief, tottering on the brink of the grave through age and infirmities, had the conſolation of ſecuring the happineſs of his ſubjects, by rendering his ſon-in-law abſolute maſter of the rich and fertile province of Amboule. When La Caſe married Dian-Nong, he refuſed the title and honours which, in that country,

are

are attached to the ſovereign power. He wiſhed only to be conſidered as the firſt ſubject of his wife, who was declared ſovereign after the death of her father. La Caſe, beloved by Dian-Nong, who, to a charming countenance, added great courage, and the rareſt qualities; eſteemed and reſpected by his family, and the Amboulefe, to whom he was a father, could only offer up ineffectual vows for the proſperity of the French eſtabliſhment at Fort Dauphin.

He was not ſuffered to go to the relief of his countrymen, whom he knew to be in the utmoſt diſtreſs. Chamargou had ſet a price upon his head, as well as upon thoſe of the five Frenchmen who had followed him to Amboule. The chiefs, who reſided in the neighbourhood of the fort, highly irritated to find that an attempt ſhould be made againſt the life of a man for whom they entertained the higheſt veneration, una-

nimouſly refuſed to ſupply the colony with proviſions. An abſolute famine, therefore, was now added to increaſe the deſolation occaſioned by fevers and other diſtempers, which had reduced the number of the French to eighty men.

The eſtabliſhment at Fort Dauphin was on the point of being totally ruined, when the arrival of a veſſel, commanded by Kercadio, a gentleman of Brittany, ſuſpended for ſome time the evils with which the colony was afflicted.

Diſorder and confuſion had never ceaſed to prevail among the French from the time that they firſt formed a ſettlement in Madagaſcar. The iſlanders deteſted, and even began to deſpiſe them. They were incenſed at our tyranny; and our inteſtine diviſions had weakened that ſentiment of terror, with which the ſuperiority of our arms had at firſt inſpired them. Captain

Kercadio,

Kercadio ſaw, therefore, that the aſſiſtance he had brought with him from France could not be of long duration. That brave officer, who was free from the prejudices of his ſtation, and the harſhneſs peculiar to his profeſſion, judged it neceſſary to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between Charnargou and La Caſe. He repreſented to the former, that he could no longer conſider as his ſubaltern, a man, who, by his marriage with Dian-Nong, had become not only abſolute maſter of the province of Amboule, but ſovereign alſo of the whole iſland of Madagaſcar. No madneſs, indeed, could have been attended with more fatal conſequences to the French, than that of the head of a languiſhing colony obſtinately perſiſting to treat as a rebel, a perſon as powerful as he was reſpected, and who, by a ſingle word, might have occaſioned his deſtruction. Deſpairing that his reaſon-

ing would have any effect on the prejudiced and inflamed mind of Chamargou, Kercadio applied to an intelligent counſellor, who, through a very ſingular accident, had embarked in his veſſel, and earneſtly begged him, as his friend, to employ his abilities, in endeavouring to convince the governor what were his real intereſts, and thoſe of the colony entruſted to his care.

If the counſellor ſucceeded in this difficult enterprize, he was leſs indebted for the accompliſhment of his wiſhes, to his eloquence, than to the honour of being known to and protected by the marſhal de la Meilleraye. As ſoon as he informed Chamargou that he ſhould be indiſpenſably obliged to give an account to the marſhal of the cauſe of the misfortunes, and perhaps of the entire loſs of Fort Dauphin, the governor, who had been hitherto ſo haughty and intractable,

tractable, who braved famine and death, and who was on the point of ſacrificing to his deſire of revenge the melancholy remains of the colony under his command, became timorous and ſubmiſſive. The name of the marſhal alone ſtruck him with terror. He ſent to beg that Kercadio would forgive his obſtinacy; and did every thing in his power to induce that officer to bring about a reconciliation between him and La Caſe; offering, at the ſame time, to make every reparation that might be required. Kercadio ſet out, therefore, for Amboule, accompanied by the counſellor. The negociation with which he was charged, experienced neither difficulty nor delay. La Caſe deſpiſed the vain efforts of his enemies. This reſpectable character had no ſtronger deſire than that of being uſeful to his countrymen. He haſtened to their aſſiſtance, as ſoon as he had permiſ-

ſion; peace and abundance followed him to Fort Dauphin; and during the time that he directed it by his counſel, diſorder and want ceaſed to afflict that eſtabliſhment.

Dian-Nong behaved with no leſs generoſity than La Caſe; and ſuch is the force of virtue, that there was not a ſingle Frenchman who was not ſenſibly affected by the heroic courage of this woman, who had ſufficient command over herſelf to baniſh all remembrance of the injuries done to her huſband. She gave way to that ſweet impulſe, or rather innate deſire, which inclines man to aſſiſt his fellow-creatures, when he ſees them in diſtreſs.

The counſellor ſhared with his friend Kercadio the happineſs of having brought back peace and plenty to Fort Dauphin; but without forgetting the deteſtable ſtratagem by which he had been torn from his buſineſs, and his favourite purſuits. He had been

been wandering for ſeveral years on the ſtormy ocean, without any particular object in view; and was traverſing diſtant countries, contrary to his intereſt and inclination. His wiſhes, directed ſolely to his native ſoil, could not be accompliſhed without experiencing new diſtreſſes. The bitter remembrance of the manner in which his confidence had been abuſed, in order to give him up to deſpair, ſtill aggravated the ſeverity of his fate. Ye, who are ſo often dupes to the falſe appearances and deceitful looks of thoſe impoſtors who found their fortunes on your credulity, may this relation be uſeful to you, and preſerve you from the misfortune of heedleſsly truſting yourſelves into the hands of thoſe worthleſs men, who do not flatter and careſs you but becauſe they know you, and through motives which your vanity does not permit you to perceive. This counſellor, commiſſioned to

execute

execute an order which his family had ſolicited and obtained for tranſporting his brother to Madagaſcar, on account of his profligacy, was ſo imprudent as to entruſt himſelf, at Nantz, to one of thoſe officious men who have the perfidious talent of inſpiring ſtrangers with confidence, and of profiting by their ſimplicity. This wretch thought it a harmleſs joke to kidnap the counſellor, in the room of his brother, whom he ſuffered to eſcape, and by this double fraud he ſtripped both of them of their money.

It would appear as if Providence had thought proper to inflict this cruel puniſhment upon the lawyer, in order to ſhew, that men ought never to depart from a ſtrict obſervance of the rules of juſtice, even when their motive is laudable, and when, by doing ſo, advantages are likely to reſult to the perſon whom they wiſh to amend.

At

At the end of the laſt century, the French wiſhed at any event to people their colonies. Reſpecting the means of doing this, they were far from being ſcrupulous or delicate. They often hurried away by ſtratagem, and oftener by violence, young men accuſed of miſconduct. Seldom did they enquire thoroughly into the accuſation brought againſt them; and many, without doubt, were made victims to this ſecret kind of inquiſition. The greater part of our colonies, however, have received benefit from theſe forced emigrations. The exiles ſeem to have forſaken their vices when they changed their climate; but this effect can appear ſurpriſing only to thoſe who are little accuſtomed to reflection. It may be readily perceived, that eaſe and liberty muſt have produced this change. In civilized countries, the paſſions are inflamed by reſtraint; but in free and fertile countries

tries the diſturbers of ſocial order loſe their vicious inclinations almoſt in an inſtant.

Is there a freer, or more happy nation in the world than the United States of America? The rights of every individual are there held ſacred. Dangerous would it be for any one who ſhould attempt to violate them. However powerful he might be, he would be conſidered as an enemy to his country.

In that happy country virtue, knowledge, talents and induſtry meet with a moſt diſtinguiſhed reception. Burthenſome privileges, frivolous diſtinctions, and humiliating preferences have never yet taken deep root there, as in Europe. Little inequality is found there; and the people wiſh to acknowledge that only which naturally ariſes from ſuperiority of talents and knowledge. The action of the law has the ſame power over him

him who commands, as over him who obeys. Juſtice is equally diſtributed to all; and convenience is never ſubſtituted in the room of equity.

The moſt numerous claſs of citizens is never degraded by abſurd prejudices, which, in Europe, render individuals ſo much diſcontented with their ſituation that they are continually obliged to leave it. The duty of contributing towards the ſupport of public affairs has never had the appearance of a badge of ſlavery. May this example make an impreſſion on the enlightened nations of Europe, and teach them that the cauſe of all their diſorders is that exceſſive inequality of power and riches, which induce the greater part of mankind to employ even the moſt criminal means to raiſe themſelves from the abjection and contempt in which they are ſunk by deſtructive prejudices.

Thoſe who are deſtitute of knowledge or talents,

talents, employ flattery, meanneſs, ſervility, falſehood, and perfidy, in order to elevate themſelves above their equals.

It is, doubtleſs, morally impoſſible that fortune, birth, and exalted employments ſhould not, among poliſhed nations, give great pre-eminence to thoſe who enjoy theſe advantages. It is difficult for the poor not to be, in ſome reſpects, very much dependant on the wealthy: but if the laws fall with ſeverity on the one, and lightly on the other; if vice dare ſhew itſelf without exciting contempt and indignation; if it conduct to power and grandeur, with more certainty than an union of the moſt valuable qualities, the ſage is forced to ſeek obſcurity in order to avoid oppreſſion; the people, diſguſted with virtue, becauſe it oppoſes every thing which they conſider as happineſs, hear no more the voice of conſcience, which is ſilenced by the imperious cry of intereſt;

they behold with an eye of envy thoſe who are above them; they loſe all affection for their fellow-creatures, and at length diſdain labour and innocence. Ought we to be ſurpriſed, that, in ſo reverſed an order of things, the poor, more preſſed down by the weight of their miſery, than dazzled by the vain enjoyments of the rich, and the falſe ſplendour of opulence, ſhould ſeek in vice and villany the means of rendering their lot more ſupportable? Can they be reſtrained by the dread of puniſhment, when they are every moment in torture, and compelled to deteſt their exiſtence? Did theſe fatal diſorders cauſe the ſame ravages in the country as in cities, the luxury and population of which are ſo much boaſted of, agriculture would be neglected, and the earth become a deſert. But the laborious life of the people of the country, the ſimplicity of their taſte and manners, and ſtill

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more the ſmallneſs of villages, and their reſpective diſtances, which never allow of frequent and numerous aſſemblies, check the progreſs of corruption. This deſtructive evil is found, above all, concentred in large capitals, where its poiſon, heightened by the various intereſts of a multitude of people collected together, diffuſes itſelf abroad, and infects every order of ſociety. Crimes are the inevitable conſequence and viſible ſign of a vitiated conſtitution.

It is then highly neceſſary to correct and reform every thing that leads man aſide from his duty; to inſpire him not with contempt, but with love, for his fellow creatures; and to ſhew him, that it will promote both his intereſt and his happineſs not to do an injury to another. It is not by multiplying executions that we can ever attain to ſo ſalutary an end. This barbarous and ineffectual method becomes alſo often unjuſt,

when, by a general ſubverſion of every principle and rule, the apparent proſperity of a vicious man ſeduces and miſleads thoſe unhappy wretches who expiate, by puniſhments capable of ſtriking fear and terror into the boſom of a cannibal, crimes that are the fruit of a fatal deluſion from which education could not ſecure them. What enlightened man is there who, poſſeſſing the leaſt ſentiment of humanity or juſtice, is not moved with compaſſion for thoſe melancholy victims of that depravation, which prevails among numerous bodies of people, when the laws by which they are governed are neither framed with wiſdom nor have that force which is neceſſary to preſerve good order? In ſuch caſes, can a virtuous judge in the bottom of his heart be as unfeeling as the law; and even when he condemns the guilty, does not his reaſon reproach him with his ſeverity? Let us open our priſons,

and we ſhall find, that the criminals confined there for their crimes have been almoſt all hurried to thoſe manſions of grief and miſery, by cauſes which do not exiſt in countries where man enjoys complete liberty, in the midſt of peace and tranquillity.

Every ſociety whatever has doubtleſs the right of excluding from its boſom all thoſe who diſturb its good order: but can it aſſume to itſelf the power of life and death over thoſe individuals who compoſe it? This queſtion has been warmly debated; but has it ever been reſolved? The Marquis of Beccaria, in his excellent treatiſe on *Crimes and Puniſhments*, ſays, "It appears to me abſurd "that laws, which are only an expreſſion "of the public will, that deteſts and puniſhes "homicide, ſhould commit the ſame crime "themſelves; and that, to deter mankind "from murder, they ſhould themſelves com-"mand a public murder. What then are

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"real and uſeful laws?" adds Beccaria. "Thoſe which all would propoſe, and "which all would wiſh to obſerve."

He then examines if puniſhments ought to be proportioned to crimes, and if the puniſhment of death be uſeful and neceſſary for the ſafety of ſociety. On this ſubject he obſerves, that frequency of puniſhment never rendered men better. According to this illuſtrious author, the death of a criminal is a leſs powerful check than the long and durable example of a man deprived of his liberty, and obliged to repair, by the labour of his whole life, the injury he has done to ſociety. In ſhort, the puniſhment of death is not a right, but the war of a nation againſt a citizen.

It is not neceſſary that I ſhould explain, at more length, the principles of the Marquis of Beccaria on crimes and puniſhments; and it is ſtill leſs neceſſary that I ſhould enter

into a long and elaborate diſcuſſion of ſo difficult a ſubject. It will be ſufficient for me to obſerve, that the only principle which cannot be conteſted, is that which gives to every ſociety the right of expelling thoſe who occaſion in it trouble and diſorder. But why have civilized nations made, as yet, ſcarcely any uſe of a power ſo juſt and humane? Would the earth be too ſmall for receiving all the diſturbers of public tranquillity? Africa, Aſia, and America afford immenſe tracts of land, uncultivated and uninhabited, into which if malefactors were diſperſed, they might introduce our language, our arts, and our induſtry? This, perhaps, might ſtill be the effectual means of removing thoſe obſtacles which form a barrier between us and the rich commerce of India, by the iſthmus of Suez, and the Red Sea. If the difficulty of approaching that coaſt, and the ſtill greater difficulty of finding

ing certain ſubſiſtence, be objected, I ſhall obſerve in reply, that a few ſloops, loaded with proviſions, hatchets and fire-arms, would anſwer the double object of procuring a ſafe landing, and providing againſt want. With ſuch light veſſels one may clear the moſt difficult bars, and approach the moſt dangerous ſhores. With regard to the poſſibility of ſubſiſting in places near the ſea, the hiſtory of navigation does not permit us to doubt of it. I could ſupport my aſſertion by a multitude of facts; but I ſhall confine myſelf to quote only one, with the particulars of which I am perfectly acquainted. Beſides, this fact is one of the moſt concluſive. Seven negreſſes lived on brackiſh water and ſhell-fiſh, for fifteen years, on a ſhoal in the Indian Sea, known under the name of the *Iſle de Sable*. This fact is well authenticated. A corvette, called *La Dauphine*, conveyed them to the Iſle of France,

in 1776; and it was in 1761, that the *Utile*, the veſſel in which they had embarked, was wrecked on this dangerous ſand-bank, ſituated to the eaſt of Madagaſcar, under the fifteenth degree of latitude. This iſland, the greateſt elevation of which above the level of the ſea does not exceed fifteen feet, is abſolutely barren. Its ſurface contains about one hundred and fifty acres; and it affords not the ſmalleſt ſhelter from the ſcorching ſun of the torrid zone.

But though theſe deſert and uninhabited countries ſhould not, always, anſwer thoſe views of utility, which ought to be propoſed by ſuch baniſhment, we cannot reaſonably entertain any dread of hurting large countries, inhabited by ſcattered tribes of ſavages, deſtitute of knowledge and induſtry, by leaving among them ſuch criminals as merit the moſt indulgence, when they cultivate uſeful arts.

Thoſe

Thoſe who entertain any apprehenſions of that kind, muſt have reflected very little on the cauſes of profligacy, which produce ſo much miſchief among civilized nations; for what vices can be hurtful in a country where equality prevails? Irregularities are never found but in great cities, in the midſt of luxury and wretchedneſs.

Should the colony of malefactors, which the Engliſh have lately eſtabliſhed at Botany Bay, though founded on principles different from mine, have, for the happineſs of humanity, that ſucceſs which it is reaſonable to expect, can the other nations of Europe refuſe to imitate the example? Will they complain of the expences that ſuch emigrations may occaſion? But theſe expences are juſt, as well as uſeful to ſociety; and if we compare them with the preſent expences of impriſoning and executing criminals, we ſhall find that they are much inferior. Can

we prefer the puniſhment of the galleys to baniſhment of that kind? What advantage does ſociety derive from thoſe miſerable objects, galley-ſlaves? The people neceſſary for guarding them, the idleneſs of man when ſtigmatized and degraded, and the means which he is continually deviſing to avoid the taſk impoſed on him, render them much more burthenſome than uſeful. Beſides, the union of vicious men ſpreads corruption indiſcriminately to every individual. It is a certain fact, that the leaſt guilty become in a little time as corrupted as the reſt of the profligates with whom they aſſociate. In ſhort, ſuch eſtabliſhments have carried the worſt of moral and phyſical evils into every place where it has been thought uſeful to form them. However important the nature of this digreſſion may be, I ought not to extend it farther, but leave to ſome abler pen the trouble of diſplaying, with method

method and preciſion, the numerous advantages which muſt reſult from baniſhment when commanded by juſtice, and directed by the ſpirit of wiſdom, and views of utility.

But to return to my ſubject. La Caſe remained no longer at Fort Dauphin than the time abſolutely neceſſary for re-eſtabliſhing in it abundance and peace. His wife, Dian-Nong, was much diſguſted with the place; and her own private affairs recalled her to Amboule. Beſides, Chamargou, more jealous of La Caſe's ſucceſs than grateful for his ſervices, would not have failed to do every thing in his power to render his life uncomfortable. Of this La Caſe could entertain the leſs doubt, as the governor did not deign to join his entreaties to thoſe of the reſt of the colony, in order to induce him to remain at the fort. At the moment, however, when the French, to the number

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of two hundred, were levying conſiderable taxes from the fertile province of Carcanoſſi, and giving law to the iſlanders, a cruel war again broke out to deluge that fine country in blood, and to render the aſſiſtance of La Caſe neceſſary. This war, more fatal to the French than the Malegaches, was occaſioned by the inconſiderate zeal of a miſſionary. Dian Manangue, ſovereign of the provice of Mandrarey, a powerful, bold and ſpirited chief, and a faithful ally to the French, had received in his *doüac*, with every mark of diſtinction, one Father Stephen, a Lazariſt, and ſuperior of the miſſion of Madagaſcar.

This father, charmed with the excellent qualities of the chief, imagined that it would be an eaſy matter to convert him. When Dian Manangue perceived his intention, he thought it a mark of reſpect due to the friendſhip which he had vowed to the French,

French, and above all, to the recommendation of La Caſe, to inform the zealous miſſionary that all his efforts would be fruitleſs. Theſe people are fond of making orations, and of haranguing in public. Dian Manangue, therefore, aſſembled his women and family, in order that he might declare publicly that nothing was capable of making him renounce his ancient cuſtoms. "I "pity," ſaid he, "your folly, in wiſhing, "that, at my age, I ſhould ſacrifice my happineſs and the pleaſures which ſurround "me in my *donac* to your will. I pity you "for being deprived of that which ſoothes "the cares of life. You permit me to live "with one woman: but, if the poſſeſſion "of one woman be a good, why is the poſ-"ſeſſion of a numerous ſeraglio an evil, "when peace and harmony prevail among "thoſe who compoſe it? Do you obſerve "among us any ſymptoms of jealouſy, or

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" ſeeds of hatred? No—All my women are " good—they all endeavour to render me " happy; and I am more their ſlave than " their maſter.

" But, if your maxims are ſo uſeful and " neceſſary, why do not your countrymen " at the fort follow them?—They ought " to know much better than I the merit and " value of your words. Believe me, my " friend, I will not deceive you; it is im- " poſſible for me to change my cuſtoms; I " will never quit them but with my life. I, " however, give you leave to exerciſe your " zeal on the people who are ſubject to my " authority; and I give you the ſame power " over my family and my children. But " this permiſſion will be of very little avail, " unleſs you can ſuit your precepts to our " manners and uſages."

Father Stephen made no other reply to this ſpeech than to order the chief, in a peremptory

peremptory tone, to diſmiſs all his women, except one. This miſſionary even ſo far loſt ſight of moderation, that he had the temerity to threaten that he would cauſe the French to carry away all his women, if he delayed, for a moment, to put his order in execution. It may be readily imagined, that a behaviour ſo violent and unexpected muſt have occaſioned a general indignation and revolt in the *donac*. The women fell upon the miſſionary; loaded him with reproaches and blows; and in their fury they would have undoubtedly ſtrangled him, had not Dian Manangue, notwithſtanding the agitation he was under, come ſpeedily to his aſſiſtance. The chief was obliged to make uſe of all his authority before he was permitted to remain alone a ſingle moment with this father, whom he diſmiſſed after giving him a rich preſent. Beſides, he aſked of the miſſionary a reſpite

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of fifteen days to determine on the grand affair of his converſion: but this delay, ſolicited with ſo much earneſtneſs by the chief, and with difficulty granted by the miſſionary, was intended to anſwer a very different purpoſe. Dian Manangue wiſhed to gain time, in order to quit the province of Mandrarey, without dread of being purſued by the French; and, when he thought he could do this in ſafety, he departed with his women and ſlaves, to ſeek ſhelter in the country of the Machicores, which is twenty-five leagues diſtant from Fort Dauphin.

His departure, however, was not ſo private as to eſcape the knowledge of Father Stephen, for he had ſpies even in the *donac* of the chief. In vain, therefore, did Chamargou endeavour to retain him. The miſſionary, conſulting only his zeal, formed the raſh reſolution of following Dian Manangue to the country of the Machicores.

A brother of St. Lazarus, and another Frenchman, with ſix ſervants or domeſtics, loaded with ſacerdotal habits, accompanied him in this dangerous expedition.

In the firſt week of Lent, 1664, Father Stephen joined Dian Manangue, after experiencing much fatigue and a multitude of diſaſters. The chief, more aſtoniſhed than alarmed at the courage of the miſſionary, behaved to him with the moſt profound reverence, and received him in a manner which he had no title to expect. In vain did he beg him to renounce the project which he had formed of converting him; obſerving, that his manners and uſages were an inſuperable obſtacle to ſuch a change. Father Stephen, inſtead of making any reply, ſnatched from him his *ofi* and his amulets, threw them into the fire, and declared open war againſt him. It need be no matter of ſurpriſe that this violent conduct of

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the miſſionary ſhould occaſion his deſtruction, as well as that of thoſe who attended him. Dian Manangue cauſed them all to be inſtantly butchered; and, at the ſame time, ſwore, that he would entirely extirpate the French from the iſland. In order that he might execute this fatal vow with more certainty, the chief ſent his ſon, who had been baptiſed, to La Vatangue, his brother-in-law, to acquaint him with the motives which had induced him to free himſelf from the tyranny of the French, whoſe inſidious deſigns aimed at nothing leſs than to aboliſh the manners, uſages, and religion of the country; adding, that his *oli* (a kind of amulet conſulted by theſe iſlanders) had commanded him to defend them, even at the hazard of his life; and he aſſured La Vatangue, that the French had rendered themſelves incapable of conquering, ſince they had dared to proceed to ſuch criminal

exceſſes. The irritated chief gave notice to his brother-in-law, alſo, that Chamargou had ſent forty Frenchmen to the eaſtern coaſt, and that he might eaſily ſurpriſe and maſſacre them. "I ſend you my ſon," continued he at the end of the letter, "to "be at the head of the army which you diſ- "patch to attack and deſtroy the French: "it is my *oli* that inſpires me; and you are "well acquainted with the misfortunes "which come upon us when we do not "faithfully obey its mandates. My ſon "will give you a particular account of every "thing that has paſſed; and you will, no "doubt, be filled with indignation when "you know the perfidious behaviour of "theſe ſtrangers towards their moſt faithful "ally." La Vatangue was extremely happy on receiving this intelligence of the expedition of the forty Frenchmen; but he had only time to be upon his guard; for

two days after the arrival of his nephew, his ſpies brought him word, that the French were encamped at the diſtance of a league from his village.

This chief ſent them a preſent of rice, honey, and four oxen, begging them to inform him what was the intention of their journey, becauſe he had never ſeen ſuch a numerous body of Europeans in the interior parts of the iſland. La Forge, who commanded this detachment, returned for anſwer, that he had orders to ſubject his country to the dominion of Fort Dauphin. The chief, alarmed at ſo unexpected an enterprize, requeſted peace; offered to give him four hundred oxen; and obſerved, that his country of Haye-Fontchy was at too great a diſtance from the fort to excite the hatred or jealouſy of the French. La Forge rejected with diſdain the propoſals of the chief, and had the madneſs to aſk twenty thou-

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ſand oxen as the price of a peace. To ſo extravagant a demand La Vatangue made no reply; but whilſt theſe adventurers were ranging through a field of ſugar-canes, he cauſed them all to be ſlaughtered.

The particulars of the diſaſter which befel theſe forty adventurers, ſent out by Chamargou, were known by a Portugueſe, who was the only perſon that eſcaped, by taking ſhelter in a large maſh covered with reeds and ſtagnated water. In this place he remained two days, concealed up to the neck in mud. The iſlanders, who purſued him, fearing that they would ſink in the earth, which was ſoft and ſpungy, ſet fire to the reeds, in order that they might oblige the Portugueſe to come forth; but under cover of the thick ſmoke, occaſioned by this conflagration, he had the good fortune to eſcape. The iſlanders wiſhed much to deſtroy this man, that Chamargou might

not receive intelligence of the fate of his companions, and come to attack them before the arrival of Dian Manangue, who was ſtill with his army in the country of the Machicores.

The Portugueſe related, that their expedition had been attended with ſucceſs till they fell in with La Vatangue. Their number ſpread terror and conſternation throughout all the villages where they paſſed: the chiefs paid, without heſitation, the contributions which were exacted; and they were on the point of reaping the fruit of a long and fatiguing journey when the inſatiable rapacity of their commander occaſioned their ruin, and the loſs of their rich booty.

Chamargou, in this relation, ought to have perceived the juſt puniſhment of theſe unfortunate plunderers, who were going to ravage countries over which they had no kind of authority: but this governor, inſtead

ſtead of profiting by the leſſon given him, formed the fatal reſolution of carrying fire and the ſword amongſt the Malegaches. He ſet out, therefore, at the head of thirty Frenchmen, followed by a ſmall army of Mananbouleſe; ſlaughtered without diſtinction both women and children; ſet fire to all the villages which he found in the courſe of his march; and took poſſeſſion of the *donac* of Dian Manangue. Father Manier, the only miſſionary who remained, carried his ſtandard during this bloody and inhuman expedition, on the particulars of which I ſhall not farther enlarge. An eye-witneſs, who was afterwards provincial commiſſary of artillery, publiſhed an account of it in 1722, in a work entitled, *A Voyage to Madagaſcar, by M. V.*

The manuſcripts which furniſhed me with materials for this relation do not agree in every point with that author; but it ap-

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pears, that Chamargou was obliged by an abſolute ſcarcity of proviſions to make an attempt to regain Fort Dauphin. When he arrived at the great river Mandrarey, and was endeavouring to croſs it, Dian Manangue, who had watched his motions, appeared on the oppoſite bank with an army of ſix thouſand men to oppoſe his paſſage. This chief, bearing the ſurplice and ſquare cap of the miſſionary Stephen at the head of his forces, braved the French, who were on the point of periſhing by famine. In the mean time La Caſe arrived, accompanied by ten Frenchmen, and three thouſand Androfaces, who were his ſubjects, or rather the ſubjects of his wife, Dian-Nong. As ſoon as this brave man came up, he ruſhed into the water, ordered his people to fire upon the enemy, and by the terror of his name, rather than the ſuperiority of his arms, forced them to quit the borders of the river,

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and to betake themſelves to flight. Though the approach of night ought to have prevented him, he then ſet forward to purſue them. Having diſcovered Dian Manangue, amidſt a numerous body of the iſlanders, he wiſhed to throw himſelf upon him: but Rabazé, a friend and favourite of the chief, had the courage to ſtop him, and to ſacrifice his life to ſave that of his ſovereign. The darkneſs of night only put an end to the carnage: but on the concluſion of this bloody war Fort Dauphin was again reduced to the moſt deplorable ſtate of diſtreſs. The chiefs ceaſed to ſend in proviſions, and even intercepted thoſe which the garriſon endeavoured to procure from diſtant parts. Dian Manangue, who pretended to be ſovereign lord of a great part of the iſland, threatened our eſtabliſhment with a formidable army; and his preſence alone would have occaſioned a famine,

mine, had it not been for five thouſand cattle, which La Caſe found means to convey into the fort. All the expeditions of this extraordinary man were attended with the moſt complete ſucceſs. With thirteen Frenchmen, and two thouſand Androfaces, he defeated Dian Ravaras, who was at the head of an army of eighteen thouſand men, and took from him twenty-five thouſand oxen, and five thouſand ſlaves. The great celebrity of La Caſe made the council of the company, at length, ſee the neceſſity of employing and rewarding a man, who had rendered them ſuch ſignal ſervices, and who was ſtill capable of rendering them much greater.

They, therefore, ſent him a lieutenant's commiſſion; made him at the ſame time a preſent of a ſword; and congratulated him on his ſucceſs.

La Caſe charged M. de Rennefort, who

was returning to France, to thank the company for the new marks of favour conferred on him, and to inform them, that he would undertake the conquest of the island with two hundred Frenchmen, and realize the other advantageous projects which he had already had the honour of proposing, if they would agree that he should be accountable to them only for his conduct. It does not, however, appear that the company adopted this plan, which was more that of a brave soldier than of an enlightened governor; for an honest man respects the laws of hospitality, and laments to see the principles of justice and humanity violated for the sordid interests of commerce.

In 1666, the marquis of Mondevergue was appointed by the king to the general command of all the French establishments situated on the other side of the equinoctial;

tial; and Caron and La Faye had, at the ſame time, the management of all the commerce of the Indies. The marquis of Mondevergue arrived at Fort Dauphin on the 10th of March 1667, in a veſſel of thirty-ſix guns, and was followed by a ſmall fleet of nine ſhips, on board which were two directors of the Indies, an attorney general, four companies of infantry, ten chiefs of colonies, eight merchants, and thirty-two women.

As ſoon as Mondevergue arrived, he cauſed himſelf to be proclaimed admiral, and governor-general of the French colonies in the Eaſt. He was, however, obliged to have recourſe to La Caſe, in order to procure proviſions for his fleet. La Caſe, ever ready to ſerve his country, provided for the whole; and, beſides this, brought about a reconciliation between the French and Dian Manangue, whoſe bravery and intelligence were not to be deſpiſed. This

chief, who at the fort was ſtyled the prince of Mandrarey, ſwore obedience and fidelity to the governor general.

Caron, who was a Dutchman, did not remain long at Fort Dauphin. He ſet out for Surat, with a great part of the fleet, in order to take the management of that ſettlement.

La Faye, however, continued at Fort Dauphin; and in the month of November 1670, another fleet of ten ſhips arrived, commanded by M. de la Haye, captain of the Navarre, a veſſel of fifty-ſix guns. All theſe ſhips belonged to the king, and were equipped with the war complement of arms and men. La Haye aſſumed the quality of general and admiral, with the authority of viceroy, and made Chamargou ſecond in command, and La Caſe major of the iſland. At this period, the company had given up to the king the ſovereignty of Madagaſcar.

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The marquis of Mondevergue, to whoſe option it had been left either to remain governor of the iſland, or to return to France, choſe the latter courſe, and embarked in a ſhip called the Mary, in the month of February 1671. On his arrival at Port-Louis, he found a commiſſary, who had orders to make him give an account of his adminiſtration. The company were much incenſed againſt him; for La Haye, with whom he had quarrelled, had aſperſed his character, and accuſed him of ſeveral miſdemeanors. Though the public voice was in his favour, this brave officer, who had governed the iſland with prudence, and re-eſtabliſhed peace in it, was obliged to yield to the ſuperior influence of his adverſary, and died a priſoner in the caſtle of Saumur.

La Haye, whoſe authority was unlimited, now reſolved to deliver himſelf from

thoſe

thoſe chiefs who gave him offence; and, accordingly, propoſed to Chamargou and La Caſe to declare war againſt Dian Ramouſaye who had come to render him homage. This chief, who reſided neareſt to Fort Dauphin, was ſummoned to ſend immediately to the fort all the arms which he had received from the French. It may be readily conjectured, that this demand was followed by an abſolute refuſal. La Haye, therefore, ordered Chamargou and La Caſe to beſiege Dian Ramouſaye in his village. They had under their command ſeven hundred Frenchmen, and ſix hundred Malegaches: but their attack was not attended with ſucceſs; for Dian Ramouſaye made ſo vigorous a defence, that the French were obliged to retire. This check did not appear natural; and it was believed that Chamargou, diſcontented at being only ſecond in command,

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in a country where he had always been firſt, had contributed not a little to the failure of an enterprize, the injuſtice of which they had not even deigned to conceal. However this may be, La Haye was ſo much dejected by the miſcarriage of his firſt expedition, that he reſolved to abandon Fort Dauphin, and to carry his forces to Surat, after having viſited the iſland of Maſcarenhas, ſince called the Iſle of Bourbon.

The pride of this governor was very much hurt to think, that the whole extent of his authority was not ſufficient to prevent Chamargou, who had the ſuperiority over him in point of local knowledge, from being able, by ſecret machinations, to counteract, at his pleaſure, the operations which he wiſhed to carry into effect.

La Haye's departure was followed by the death of the brave La Caſe; and it was not difficult

difficult to foreſee, that the loſs of this celebrated man would infallibly occaſion that of the colony.

At this period, it was well known, that the iſlanders breathed nothing but vengeance againſt us, and eagerly ſought an opportunity of retaliating for our injuſtice and oppreſſion. Our yoke was become odious and inſupportable to them. Hiſtorians, for the honour of civilized nations, ought to bury in oblivion every detail of the atrocious cruelties exercifed againſt thoſe people, whom they brand with the odious epithets of barbarians, traitors, and thieves, becauſe they have revolted againſt ſome European adventurers, whoſe leaſt crime was a violation of the ſacred rights of hoſpitality.

If the eſtabliſhment at Fort Dauphin ſubſiſted ſo long, notwithſtanding the deteſtable adminiſtration of theſe rulers, it was

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the name alone of La Caſe which kept the Malegaches under ſubjection to ſo vicious a conſtitution. The memory of that truly extraordinary man is ſtill held in great veneration among theſe iſlanders. His bravery, joined to more valuable qualities, and above all, the alliance he contracted by his marriage with Dian-Nong, inſpired them with ſo much reſpect, that it was only after his death, that all theſe chiefs united againſt the wretched remains of the French adventurers, whoſe temporary ſucceſſes were always followed by memorable diſaſters.

La Caſe, without doubt, was of too warlike a diſpoſition, and this is a ſtain upon his memory: but all people almoſt have a ſecret propenſity to this deſtructive ſcourge, which deſolates the moſt beautiful countries in the world, and occaſions a thouſand times more evils to mankind than all the other

other ſcourges united. What man is there whom a paſſion for glory does not, ſometimes, ſo far intoxicate as to make him forget every ſentiment of juſtice and humanity? It is very difficult for a brave ſoldier to make his conduct, in every reſpect, that of a philoſopher; and, under this point of view, it would, perhaps, be unjuſt to paſs a ſevere cenſure upon all the actions of him who in Madagaſcar did moſt honour to his nation.

Chamargou ſurvived La Caſe only a ſhort time, and was ſucceeded by La Breteſche, in the command of the ſettlement. La Breteſche was La Caſe's ſon-in-law; but he poſſeſſed neither the talents nor the influence of his predeceſſor. Finding that it was impoſſible for him to preſerve his authority, amidſt the diviſion and diſorder which prevailed between the French and

the natives, he took advantage of a ſhip which had touched at the iſland, and which was going to Surat, to embark for that colony with his whole family. Several miſſionaries, and ſome Frenchmen, followed his example; but ſcarcely had the veſſel ſet ſail, when a ſignal of diſtreſs appeared hoiſted on the fort. The captain of the veſſel immediately ordered his boats to be launched, and proceeded towards the ſhore; but he arrived only time enough to pick up, below the walls, a few miſerable wretches who had eſcaped a general maſſacre of the garriſon, which had been effected in conſequence of orders given, for that purpoſe, by Dian-Ramouſaye, and other chiefs in the neighbourhood. Such was the diſmal end of a colony which might have become flouriſhing and uſeful to commerce, had not thoſe who directed it taken

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every method they could to render the French name odious to these people, naturally mild, hospitable, and humane.

Among the different memoirs which I have consulted in compiling this historical account of the first establishments of the French in the southern part of Madagascar, I must make honourable mention of a manuscript given me by M. de Malesherbe. That minister, dear to the sciences and to letters, whose venerable name is never pronounced but accompanied with that tribute of homage and respect which are due to knowledge united with virtue, had the goodness to add to it a large map of Madagascar, accurately delineated, and executed with great care. That map, which he permitted me to have reduced and engraved, is prefixed to this work.

The manuscript and the map which accompanied it were the production of M.

Robert, who, in 1725, dedicated them to the duke de Chaulnes, whoſe protection he then ſolicited, in order to form a new eſtabliſhment in the northern part of Madagaſcar.

M. Robert had been taken by the pirates, and conducted to that iſland, where he remained ſeveral years, which he employed uſefully in traverſing its principal provinces, and making himſelf acquainted with their productions. The object of his plan for an eſtabliſhment there was, to collect the riches which the pirates had diſperſed throughout the northern part of the country, while it ſerved them as a place of refuge; but this project, the advantages of which would, perhaps, never have compenſated for the expence, was not carried into execution. At preſent there are no conſiderable eſtabliſhments in Madagaſcar but one, formed, of late years, in the ſouthern part,

by M. de Modave, a man of ſpirit and a brave officer, and another, in the northern part, by count Benyowſki. I was at the Iſle of France in 1768, when M. de Modave came, in the name of the king, to take poſſeſſion of the government of Fort Dauphin. The duke de Praſlin was then miniſter of the marine, and had approved the plan preſented to him by M. de Modave.

As it appears to be of ſome importance, I ſhall here give a copy of the memoir preſented to that miniſter, when this eſtabliſhment was projected.

MEMOIR OF M. DE MODAVE.

"THE Iſle of France, like our Antilles, may conſume our proviſions, and, in exchange, give us productions which we have not.

"It is a place where our ſhips, and people employed in the Aſiatic trade, may

" ſtop and take in refreſhments. It affords, " alſo, the powerful means of protecting " our commerce, and of defending us in " India. So many advantages united, might " well perſuade ſome that this colony, of " all our eſtabliſhments beyond ſea, is that " which ought moſt to intereſt government; " but on ſucceſſively examining the Iſle of " France, under every view in which it " appears ſo important, we ſhall find, that " it is everywhere in that ſtate of imper- " fection which would oblige us to doubt " of its utility, were it confined to what it " can be by itſelf and its preſent dependen- " cies. The Iſle of France, indeed, conſi- " dered under the firſt view, and as a me- " dium of exchange, which is undoubtedly " the moſt intereſting, has ſcarcely any thing " to give either to Aſia or to Europe*. Be- " ſides,

* The introduction of ſpiceries, by the indefatigable

" ſides, it cannot increaſe its proviſions for " exportation, but by leſſening objects " much more eſſential. It will be of no " uſe for the ſubſiſtence of troops; it is ſo " ſmall that it can never anſwer this pur- " poſe, even were all the cultivated lands " in it employed in raiſing grain and ve- " getables for the table.

" The Iſle of France, already ſo pre- " carious by the uncertainty and ſmallneſs " of its crops of grain, has a fault, alſo, in " regard to ſtrength. All the labour of " this colony is conſigned to ſlaves, and it " is deficient in population. Theſe imper- " fections, however, may be corrected by " forming an eſtabliſhment at Madagaſcar; " and therefore it is neceſſary to attempt it.

gable zeal of M. Poivre, has now given riſe to an important branch of commerce, which M. de Modave could not be acquainted with at the time when he wrote this memoir.

" The ſucceſs of this enterpriſe appears " certain; the expence will be moderate, " and the utility of it immenſe.

" An infinite variety of objects may be " procured from Madagaſcar. This iſland " unites the productions of two zones. " It may furniſh, in abundance, for the " Aſiatic and European trade, cotton, ſilk, " gums, grapes of all kinds, ambergriſe, " ebony, dye-woods, hemp, flax, iron of " an excellent quality, ſeveral metals, and " even gold. All ſorts of Indian ſtuffs " may be manufactured here at a much " cheaper rate than any where elſe. The " great plenty of retail articles, together with " rice and corn, will ſecure every ſubſiſt- " ence neceſſary for ſuch ſea and land forces " as government may wiſh to keep up in " the Iſle of France. To all theſe objects " we muſt add ſalt fiſh, hides, and tallow.

" Navigation between this iſland and " Ma-

" Madagaſcar may, with ſome precaution,
" be kept open at all times. An intercourſe
" between theſe two iſlands is, therefore,
" natural and neceſſary. The riches and
" ſtrength of the Iſle of France depend on
" Madagaſcar; and it will be equally eaſy
" for the former to execute and preſerve
" the propoſed eſtabliſhment. There is no
" neceſſity for ſending troops and ſquadrons
" for this conqueſt, nor for tranſporting a
" whole ſociety at a great expence. Better
" arms and better means will promote
" this eſtabliſhment without expending
" much money. It is only by the force of
" example, morals, religion, and a ſuperior
" police, that we propoſe to ſubdue Mada-
" gaſcar. The ſociety there is already
" formed; and nothing is neceſſary but to
" invite it to us, and to direct it according to
" our views, which can meet with no ob-
" ſtacles, as they will intereſt the Mede-

" caſſes

" caſſes themſelves by the advantage of a " reciprocal exchange.

" When I am eſtabliſhed at Fort Dau- " phin, with a detachment of troops under " my command for the defence of the fort, " and the protection of the French, I will " make an excurſion for ſix months into the " interior parts of the country, becauſe Fort " Dauphin muſt not be conſidered as the " beſt place for a ſettlement. Three leagues " to the ſouth of that fort is the beautiful " river of Fanſhere, the courſe of which, to " the diſtance of twenty leagues from the " ſea, is navigable for ſmall veſſels. Above " its mouth, it forms a lake, three thou- " ſand fathoms in diameter, the depth of " which is never more than ten fathoms.

" This lake communicates with the ſea " by a channel, of from fifty to ſixty fathoms " in breadth, formed by the fall of the wa- " ter; and, in the drieſt ſeaſon, it is ſuffi-

" cient to afford a paſſage to the largeſt " ſloops. With a little labour, this lake " might be made one of the fineſt harbours " in the world; and it appears that it is at " Fanſhere that a ſettlement ought to be " made.

" When once a camp is tranſported thi- " ther, with the conſent of the natives, it " will be proper to double the garriſon; and " it will then be neceſſary to have mecha- " nics for erecting the firſt works and build- " ings.

" Our ſafety in the country, and the " ſtrength that is to be acquired for the " eſtabliſhment, and even for the Iſle of " France, ought not to allow us to have " ſlaves in our ſervice: but the natives of " the country might be employed for hire; " and, as it is eaſy to make uſe of the " plough, it will be poſſible to have ſoon,

" and

" and at leſs expence than in the Iſle of " France, a very extenſive tract of land cul- " tivated, and with a few planters.

" It will be requiſite to have on the ſpot " a magazine ſtored with brandy, blue cloth, " glaſs ware, and ſome light French ſtuffs.

" The firſt twenty habitations will enſure " the ſucceſs of the eſtabliſhment; and after " the ſecond year, it will be eaſy to form " many others.

" During the firſt two years ſcarcely any " thing can be done, as one may ſay, but to " make a trial of the eſtabliſhment; and, to " ſecure it, materials muſt be prepared to " build a fort, which may be raiſed in the third " year, rather for ſupporting the dignity of " the governor, than for the ſake of keep- " ing poſſeſſion by force. The Iſle of France, " and the affection of the natives, ought to " be the true ſafeguard of this ſettlement.

" On

" On theſe two principles the fort may be " conſtructed without ſhaking the founda- " tion of the new colony.

" The expence of the propoſed enterprize " will be as moderate as its utility will be " extenſive. That part of it incurred by " troops will be little or nothing, as they " will form part of the garriſon of the Iſle " of France, where their maintenance would " be attended with more expence. As to " the houſes to be built, they will require " only a ſmall number of workmen, who, " for moderate wages, will in a little time " conſtruct all the neceſſary edifices, and " the money expended on them will ſoon " be reimburſed by the ſale of various arti- " cles which may be procured from the " eſtabliſhment, and which will be ſet apart " for that purpoſe.

" All theſe buildings, therefore, will be- " long to the king, without taking any " thing

"thing from the funds ſent to the Iſle of "France to defray the expence of erecting "them.

"The only increaſe, which the propoſed "eſtabliſhment will add to the expence of "the iſles of France and Bourbon, will be for "the officers and people employed. This "ſum, however, will not be conſiderable; "for it will not amount to forty thouſand "livres. I value at 33,548 livres the "different utenſils, and articles of merchan-"dize, which muſt be taken from the ſtores, "in the Iſle of France, to ſupply with pro-"viſions and other neceſſaries this new co-"lony, with the management of which the "miniſter has been pleaſed to intruſt me."

Such is the memoir which ſerved as a baſis for the French eſtabliſhment at Fort Dauphin, under the direction of M. de Modave. If the reſult of this new enterprize did not correſpond with the hopes

which

which the miniſter had entertained, it was becauſe every colony, not founded on the happineſs and inſtruction of thoſe people among whom an attempt is made to eſtabliſh it, will always have temporary ſucceſs only. It is not ſoldiers but artiſans, farmers, and well-informed and laborious men, that ought to be eſtabliſhed among ſuch people. We ought never to forget that the treaties of ſavages with the Europeans are, in every reſpect, like thoſe which children would make with philoſophers; and ſince the treaties hitherto formed with the Malegaches are evidently in that ſituation, it would be highly unjuſt to take advantage of them contrary to the intereſts of theſe iſlanders. There are none but ſtupid or diſhoneſt men who can affix a value to contracts ſo ridiculouſly illuſory. You have obtained by cunning: you have by force extorted conceſſions from the credulous inhabi-

habitants of foreign lands; and becauſe they foreſee not the danger to which they expoſe themſelves, by receiving you amongſt them with friendſhip and generoſity, you wiſh even to turn their kindneſs againſt them, and to make a right of them in order to oppreſs them, and ſubject them to your dominion.

If great commercial advantages invite you to Madagaſcar, adopt principles more juſt and humane.

For forming your eſtabliſhments, chooſe farmers and mechanics. Thoſe who know the character of the Malegaches, entertain no doubt reſpecting the reception which theſe iſlanders will give to men whoſe frugal and active lives baniſh vice, and introduce abundance.

Cultivating the earth by the plough, and a number of other uſeful practices, will inſpire theſe people with ſentiments of gratitude

and

and veneration. India will ſupply you with a multitude of ingenious artiſans and weavers, who know how to manufacture cotton ſtuffs, and to give them thoſe brilliant and durable colours which cauſe them to be ſo much ſought for in commercial countries.

Colouring ſubſtances, extracted from vegetables, have not, in our frozen climates, the ſame ſplendour and the ſame ſtrength, as in the ſcorching climates of the torrid zone.

The fruits of our gardens, which grow on wall trees, never aſſume a ruddy colour, but on that ſide which is expoſed to the rays of the ſun.

We have no acid that fixes colours on cotton cloth, in ſo laſting and unalterable a manner, as the juice extracted from Adam's fig-tree, which we call *Bananier*.

The Indians excel alſo in manufacturing ſilk ſtuffs. Several provinces of Madagaſ-

car would furniſh a great abundance of that valuable ſubſtance. So important a branch of commerce ought the leſs to be neglected, as the Malegaches, in the ſouthern part of the iſland, are acquainted with the method of preparing and weaving it, in order to make veſtments.

In the neighbourhood of the Bay of Antongil, I diſcovered four kinds of cods, which produce ſilk of an excellent quality.

The Malegaches diſtinguiſh them by the four following denominations.

The *andevè* is a cod almoſt like that which, in the ſouthern provinces of France, furniſhes the beſt ſilk.

The *ande-vontaqua*, another cod, ſmaller than the preceding, furniſhes a ſilk much finer than that which comes from China, and equally beautiful.

The tree called *anacau* is covered, during a certain ſeaſon of the year, with ſmall cods,

cods, which being ſuſpended by filaments hang from the leaves and branches. The ſilk procured from theſe cods is remarkable for its ſtrength and fineneſs; but to divide it properly, and to render it uſeful, the cods muſt be preſerved from the filth and duſt that fall from the tree. Theſe cods are known under the name of *ande-anacau*.

The fourth kind of ſilk is not ſuſceptible of being divided. The Malegaches call it *ande-ſaraha*. It is found in a kind of bag, which contains ſeveral hundreds of ſmall cods.

The wool of Madagaſcar is beautiful; but the iſlanders derive no benefit from it. The Indians, however, would eaſily teach them to prepare it, and we ſhould ſoon be indebted to them for a new and highly important branch of commerce. There are few oriental travellers who are not acquaint-

ed with thoſe fine woollen ſtuffs known in Bengal by the name of *ſhawls*, which the Mahometans uſe for turbans. This ſtuff coſts no leſs than an hundred piſtoles the yard, when the ſuperfine wool of the Cachemirian ſheep has been employed in manufacturing it.

So exorbitant a price muſt ſurpriſe thoſe who know the cheapneſs of labour in India, and at what a low rate raw materials may be procured in that country. It is, however, with very rude inſtruments that the Indian, more dexterous and more patient than the European, is enabled to weave theſe valuable ſtuffs.

Should France wiſh, in the courſe of time, to ſhare with India and China, the advantageous trade which they carry on in woollen and ſilk ſtuffs, and printed cottons, I think, and many intelligent men are of the ſame opinion, that this might be accom-

pliſhed,

pliſhed, by forming, at Madagaſcar, upon proper principles, a colony of Indian weavers, who ſhould be under the protection of the iſles of France and Bourbon. It would, however, be neceſſary to introduce there, at the ſame time, thoſe celebrated machines uſed at Mancheſter, for carding and ſpinning both coarſe and fine cotton and wool; for the art of manufacturing cloth would be confined then merely to the weaver; and, certainly, the Indian weavers have a decided ſuperiority over thoſe of Europe. Such an aſſertion does not tend to depreciate our induſtry. I am perfectly ſenſible that it would be highly abſurd to put the villages on the banks of the Ganges in competition with our large manufactories. This would be comparing the productions of patience and ſkill with thoſe of genius.

The induſtry of the Indian is not confined merely to the trade of weaving. He

underſtands the art of cultivating the earth equally well, and knows how to prepare ſugar and indigo. Under his hand clay aſſumes a variety of ſingular forms; and the earthen-ware of India is even ſought for, and eſteemed, in Europe.

The Indian is no leſs expert than the Chineſe in the lapidary art. To cut and pierce the hardeſt ſtones he makes uſe of adamantine ſpar pulveriſed, and moiſtened with oil. He employs this ſubſtance, which is of very little value in India, for the ſame purpoſes as diamond powder is employed in Europe. The Indian knows, alſo, how to render the bamboo uſeful in manufactures. He makes paper of it, and likewiſe furniture, palanquins, and veſſels for holding water. This tree is a ſpecies of large reed, from the joints of which there diſtils a kind of ſugar, much eſteemed by the orientals. This reed riſes ſometimes to the height of

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an hundred feet; and the hardneſs and lightneſs of its wood cauſe it to be employed for a variety of uſes.

Thoſe men, who in Europe have rendered themſelves eminent by a knowledge of the mechanical arts, might teach theſe Aſiatics a great number of proceſſes, from which they would derive great benefit. We are not yet well acquainted with the origin of borax. I was aſſured at Pondicherry, that this ſalt, ſo neceſſary for facilitating the fuſion of metals, is not an artificial, but a natural ſalt, and that it was procured from the mines of Aurengabad. The late M. de Laſſonne, firſt phyſician to the king, and member of the Academy of Sciences, gave me particular injunctions to make every reſearch I poſſibly could on this ſubject; but, notwithſtanding all my care, my efforts were attended with very little ſucceſs. Filagree-work, in gold and ſilver, prove,

likewiſe, to our moſt expert artiſts, that the Indians can manufacture theſe metals with great ingenuity. But without entering into farther details on the induſtry of theſe people, I ſhall only obſerve, that what I have already ſaid, is ſufficient to prove, that to eſtabliſh a colony of Indians at Madagaſcar, would be an enterpriſe worthy of an enlightened nation. The Indian will prefer Madagaſcar to his native country. He will, doubtleſs, chooſe rather to work for himſelf, in a climate ſimilar to his own, and in a fertile iſland, where he will enjoy full liberty in the midſt of peace, than to cultivate for the benefit of the Mogul, the field which was torn from his anceſtors by the moſt deteſtable robbery. By his example he will invite the Malegache to labour; and his induſtry will raiſe the colony to the higheſt degree of proſperity.

The true wealth of a nation is the pro-

duce of its labour. The induſtrious citizen, therefore, never remains in a ſtate of inactivity and indigence, but becauſe a nation neglects or miſtakes its real intereſts. A briſk trade not only gives riſe to many uſeful occupations, but it creates a neceſſity for many kinds of labour, the advantages of which can ſcarcely be calculated. Such, chiefly, are high ways, improvements in the navigation of rivers, canals of communication, the draining of marſhes, the cultivation of waſte lands, and plantations of trees on the ſummits and declivities of mountains. It cannot be too often repeated, that it is upon dry elevated ſpots that woods become of moſt utility; for in ſuch ſituations they prevent the earth from being carried down by torrents, and encumbering the beds of rivers

But if you wiſh to carry your eſtabliſhments ſoon to perfection, obſerve the ſtricteſt

economy

economy in your labours. Subſtitute the ſtrength of animals for that of men; employ currents of air, and falls of water: neglect none of thoſe moving forces diſperſed with ſo much profuſion over the face of the earth. Notwithſtanding the indifference and diſdain which moſt people affect to ſhew for the mechanical arts, that ſcience which ſerves as the baſis of them is at once neceſſary and ſublime. Can we prefer to it the vain declamations and idle chimeras of the man, who, through pride, loſes himſelf in reſearches uſeleſs to his wants, and above the reach of his weak conception?

If the utility of the mechanical arts cannot be conteſted; if the uſe of thoſe ingenious machines, which ſave much labour in moſt manufactures, be a fertile ſource of riches and proſperity, why do people, in ſome civilized countries, overlook the advantages which may be derived from them?

Does

Does not ſuch a ſign plainly point out to us that the commerce of a nation is deſtitute of ſpirit? This proof is evident; and if the proceſſes purſued, in order to ſave labour, occaſion diſorder, we may readily conclude that thoſe entruſted with the adminiſtration of government have neither knowledge nor abilities.

However this may be, the evil which reſults from economy in labour is only temporary; while the good that ariſes from it is permanent. Were a nation ſo little acquainted with its real intereſts as to reject, under this pretence, thoſe uſeful diſcoveries with which the mechanical arts have been enriched, it would, by ſuch conduct, only impoveriſh itſelf. for, how could it ſupport a competition with neighbouring nations, who adopt contrary principles? Beſides, I ſpeak here only of colonies; and ſuch inconveniences are not to be dreaded in countries

tries degraded by ſervitude. The ſlave will never deſtroy thoſe ingenious machines which are equivalent to a multitude of arms. He will never refuſe to employ that which tends to lighten the burden of his chains. If ſlavery has not totally extinguiſhed his reaſon, he will, certainly, conſider every invention, and every proceſs, which ſerves to alleviate his miſery, as the gift of Heaven.

Let the friends of humanity then unite to introduce every kind of induſtry into thoſe colonies, in the proſperity of which they are intereſted. Let them not be afraid of multiplying machines in them, and of employing every agent, of which man, by his ingenuity, has been able to render himſelf maſter. Thoſe, who in free and civilized countries complain, that theſe grand inventions may tend to deprive a multitude of hands of employment, ought, at leaſt, to allow, that they muſt, on that account, have

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a ſalutary influence in the colonies, by making the arms of the ſlave leſs uſeful to his maſter. It cannot, therefore, be denied, that powerful agents, and vigorous animals, with the aſſiſtance of machinery, may be ſubſtituted, with advantage, in the room of ſlaves. The private intereſt of the planters is thus reconciled with the principles of juſtice and humanity, to promote induſtry on their eſtates. Such a new order of things muſt, doubtleſs, gradually aboliſh ſlavery; and this change, effected in that manner, will be wiſe and prudent, and give univerſal ſatisfaction.

Among the different machines which ſhould be introduced into the colonies, we may diſtinguiſh ſteam-engines.

Steam-engines, ſuch as are ſtill uſed in the greater part of mines, conſiſt of a boiler which may be heated by combuſtible ſubſtances of every kind. The ſteam of the

water,

water, which iſſues from the boiler, introduces itſelf under the piſton of the pump, by the power of its expanſive force. When the piſton is at its higheſt degree of elevation, the communication between the ſteam that riſes from the boiler, and the cylinder or body of the pump, is intercepted. At the ſame time the injection of cold water occaſions a vacuum, by ſuddenly condenſing the ſteam with which the body of the cylinder is filled, and the weight of the external air immediately forces the piſton to deſcend. It is well known, that the valves and cocks, which open and ſhut the communication between the ſteam and the injected water, are always put in motion by the movement of the piſton. The Marquis of Worceſter, in 1663, was the firſt, who, by the means of ſteam, was able to raiſe water to a great height on alternately turning two cocks. After this diſcovery,

very, Savery, in 1700, publiſhed an account of a ſteam-engine, of which he pretended to be the inventor. A deſcription of it may be found in *Deſagulier's Treatiſe of Natural Philoſophy*. Papin, almoſt at the ſame time, conſtructed a machine which produced the like effect; but Neucomen and Cawley, the firſt an ironmonger, and the ſecond a glazier, added ſeveral new improvements to the invention of Savery. Neucomen's machine (for it acquired the name of that able artiſt) was, and ſtill is, employed in freeing mines from water. Mr. Watt, a celebrated mechanic, has lately brought this machine to the higheſt degree of perfection.

The body of the machine conſiſts of a cylinder of caſt iron, the exterior part of which is caſed with a covering of wool. This cylinder is hermetically cloſed, at the upper extremity, by a cap with a hole in it to receive the rod of the piſton.

This

This piſton moves in a collar lined with tow, which is ſqueezed cloſe to it by means of ſkrews, and is ſurrounded by a ring to confine the ſteam, and prevent the external air from penetrating into the body of the cylinder.

When the ſteam which riſes from the boiler fills the body of the cylinder, and preſſes equally on the upper and lower part of the piſton, the expanſive force of the vapour being then in equilibrio, the piſton remains fixed at its degree of elevation; but the elaſtic fluid ſucceſſively loſes its ſpring, either in the upper or lower part of the piſton, in a very ſhort time. By this excellent conſtruction, the riſing and action of the vapour are continual; for after the ſteam is intercepted under the lower part of the piſton, and the cold water injected has occaſioned a vacuum under it, the expanſive force of the ſteam preſſing upon the

piſton

piſton cauſes it to deſcend; and becauſe the communication of the ſteam with the upper part is intercepted, and that with the lower re-eſtabliſhed, the piſton cannot fail to riſe with the ſame force, if a vacuum be made in the upper part of the piſton by the injection of cold water. Such are the late improvements made in ſteam engines by Meſſrs. Watt and Bolton. Thoſe which we have in France, according to the lateſt improvements of theſe able mechanics, cauſe a vacuum in the lower part of the piſton, and not in the upper. Meſſrs. Watt and Bolton's principal object in this conſtruction was, to prevent the body of the engine, which receives the ſteam, from cooling. For this reaſon, they preferred the action of ſteam to that of the preſſure of the external air; and, in order that the water injected may not cool the cylinder, when it cauſes

a vacuum, they have added a particular pipe which communicates with the cylinder, and to which they have given the name of a condenſer: it is through this part that the cold water is injected. In order, alſo, to facilitate the reduction of the ſteam, at the moment of injection, they have added a ſmall pump, which is deſtined ſolely for cauſing a vacuum in the condenſer. A very ſimple and well-known piece of machinery ſerves to regulate the ſteam-engine, and to give it a circular motion. For this purpoſe a heavy wheel, of a large diameter, is employed, which communicates with the piſton of the engine, by means of bent levers, like thoſe uſed for turning a ſpinning-wheel by the foot. In common engines, the wheel, which ſerves as a regulator, ought to be twenty feet in diameter, and to weigh from two to two and a half tons. The greater

part

part of this enormous weight is thrown to the centre, in order that the action of the balance wheel may be more uniform.

I have entered into theſe details, becauſe I think it a matter of ſome importance to make known the lateſt improvements of this uſeful machine, in order that it may be more generally employed, not only among us, but in the colonies. Were this moving force adopted by the planters, in their mills for ſqueezing the ſugar-cane, how many ſlaves, devoted to exceſſive labour, might be relieved!

The ſugar-cane is a ſpecies of reed which riſes to the height of ten feet. It is uſually about three inches in circumference; and is covered with a kind of bark, which contains a ſpongy ſubſtance. It is divided into joints by knots placed at the diſtance of five inches from each other; and on the top it bears a

number of leaves, ſomewhat like thoſe of the common water-flag.

This plant is cultivated in ſeveral countries of Aſia and Africa. Every kind of ſoil is not equally proper for it: that where the earth is deep and light, ſeems to be the beſt.

Plantations of the ſugar-cane do not require very ſevere labour. It is ſufficient to form furrows in the ground, at the diſtance of three feet from each other: they ought to be no more than a foot in breadth, and ſix inches in depth. In theſe furrows the canes are laid lengthwiſe, and covered with earth. From each knot they ſend forth young ſhoots, but they do not come to maturity, ſo as to be fit for cutting, till the end of eighteen months. A month after the ſhoots begin to appear, all the weeds around them muſt be pulled up: but this care is not neceſſary when the cane is perfectly formed.

After

After the canes have been cut, new ſhoots ſpring up from the old roots, which at the end of fifteen months afford a ſecond crop, but their produce is only one half of the firſt. Nothing but want of hands to replant, can induce a proprietor to ſeek more than two crops from his plantation.

When the canes are cut, the next buſineſs is to ſqueeze them immediately in the mill. This operation requires tedious labour during the night; for if the juice remains more than twenty-four hours in the ciſtern from which it is conveyed to the firſt boiler, it becomes ſour. From the firſt boiler, it is ſucceſſively removed into others, till it is converted into ſugar. It is purified from that gummy ſubſtance which prevents it from becoming white and ſolid, by throwing into the laſt boiler a ſtrong lixivium of wood-aſhes and quick-lime. It may be readily perceived, that what contributes moſt

to the relief of the ſlaves, depends principally on the produce of the mill. The ſpeedier the juice is extracted, the ſooner will they be freed from night labour, ſo prejudicial to their health. Nothing, therefore, ſhould be neglected that can give ſugar-mills every poſſible degree of power and activity; and it is, certainly, neither by mules nor weak falls of water that ſo ſalutary an end can be attained. Views of intereſt unite here with the principles of humanity, to engage the planters to introduce in their mills the uſe of the ſteam-engine.

The woody part of the ſugar-cane, known under the name of *traſh**, is more than ſufficient for keeping up ebullition in the boiler of a ſteam-engine, as well as in all the boilers employed in making ſugar.

* The French call the woody part of the ſugar-cane, after the juice has been extracted, *bagaſſe*; but the Engliſh planters in the Weſt Indies call it *traſh*. T.

That

That I may more fully convince the planter of the utility of ſteam-engines, I ſhall ſhew, that, even at Paris, they ſave a great deal of expence in the moſt common labours. When a load of coals, weighing twenty-ſeven hundred weight, coſts in that capital fifty-four livres, M. Perrier, of the Academy of Sciences, whoſe calculations ſerve me as a baſis, values at no more than ſix ſous the quantity neceſſary to produce a moving force equivalent to that of a horſe labouring eight hours, and making a conſtant effort of about ſeventy-five pounds. As the ſtrength of a man is only the ſeventh part of that of a horſe, it follows, that his labour for a day may be ſupplied by a conſumption of coals to the value of ten deniers. In the greater part of our colonies, wood, and other fuel, ſuch as *traſh*, are abſolutely of no value. Why then do the planters neglect to employ a machine

of ſo much importance, which would ſave a multitude of hands? A ſteam-engine, when ſolidly conſtructed, is not apt to be deranged; it may be eaſily tranſported from one place to another; it may be erected at a ſmall expence; and it requires only a very common degree of intelligence in thoſe who attend it. Beſides, it is not expoſed to the danger of ſtopping, which, in important undertakings, occaſions long ſuſpenſions of labour, and conſequently conſiderable loſs.

It may be of ſervice, alſo, in places where the water is unwholeſome, by procuring, for the uſe of man, diſtilled water in abundance, which is well known to be always wholeſome, and fit for drinking when impregnated with air.

Thoſe who are acquainted with the effects and advantages of ſteam-engines, will not be ſurpriſed, that able mechanics, notwithſtanding

withſtanding the high price of fuel, have preferred their moving force to that of ſtreams, and falls of water. The greater part of water-currents experience continual variations by rain and drought. Water-falls require dams and ſluices, which interrupt the navigation of rivers, and ſometimes inundate lands valuable for agriculture. Beſides, water thus collected, and rendered ſtagnant, diffuſes throughout the country the ſeeds of infection, which produce peſtilential diſorders, and occaſion great mortality in ſummer and in autumn.

If, to all theſe inconveniencies, we add the frequent and expenſive reparations neceſſary for dykes, ſluices, and works under water; and reflect on the great danger of ſeeing valuable erections ſwept away in a moment by a ſudden thaw, or inundation; we ſhall readily comprehend the motives which induced Meſſrs. Watt and Bolton,

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the moſt celebrated mechanics in Europe to ſubſtitute the moving force of the ſteam-engine for that of currents and water-falls, even in the grinding of corn. On the banks of the Thames, near Blackfriars bridge, may be ſeen that grand edifice called the *Albion Mills*, where two ſteam-engines keep in motion, night and day, ſixteen pair of mill-ſtones, each ſix feet in diameter. A thouſand ſacks of flour are the daily produce of theſe mills; a produce ſufficient to ſupply food to one-third of the inhabitants of London. Four pair of mill-ſtones more are kept ready picked, to replace thoſe which are worn out, in order that the movement of the whole may never be interrupted. Should this noble enterpriſe be attended with that ſucceſs which there is every reaſon to expect, it will be a great benefit to mankind, by inviting us, through a regard for our own intereſt, to

gradually

gradually abandon our water-mills, which occaſion diſeaſes and deſolation in the country. M. Perrier followed, in France, the example of Meſſrs. Watt and Bolton, by conſtructing near the arſenal, at Paris, a mill upon the ſame plan. Scarcely was this mill finiſhed, when it was found to be a great reſource for that city; but what made its utility more apparent, was the ſtoppage of the greater part of our mills, occaſioned by the ice after the long and ſevere froſt which took place at the end of the year 1788. It was much regretted that this able mechanic confined himſelf in his undertaking to one pair of mill-ſtones; but he could not then foreſee the ineſtimable advantages which, by the nature of circumſtances, would reſult from an erection ſimply intended to try and prove the utility of the enterpriſe of Meſſrs. Watt and Bolton. Not being able, through want of time, to extend

extend his undertaking, he was obliged to confine himſelf to machinery which grinds, daily, about ſeven hundred buſhels, Paris meaſure.

It is only in the moment of diſtreſs that weak men are ſenſible of the value of induſtry. At other times, the moſt important objects are often ſacrificed to their frivolous taſtes; and nothing but ſtern neceſſity, as one may ſay, can ever compel them to pay attention to it. But why ſhould theſe men, who have, however, a great influence over public opinion, be ſo fond of praiſing indiſtinctly, and without knowing the cauſe, every thing that comes from a foreign country—and of diſcouraging, by their imprudent eulogies, thoſe able artiſts who are capable of rivalling and coming in competition with the artiſts of other nations? Have we then no manufactures in France, no kind of induſtry worthy of praiſe?

praiſe? The tapeſtries, however, of the Gobelins; the carpets of Savonerie; the rich ſtuffs of Lyons; the fine cloth of Louviers; the ſplendour and durability of our dyes; the exquiſite taſte which characteriſes the works of our artiſts; the beautiful porcelain of Seves; the large glaſs-plates of St. Gobin, and a multitude of other manufactures more or leſs important, fully prove, in my opinion, that France is not totally deſtitute of induſtry. If we wiſh to ſilence thoſe who ſo unmercifully depreciate our arts, let us aſk them, what their progreſs would be, were they free, and encouraged; and did not abſurd prejudices forbid, as one may ſay, thoſe from applying to them, who perhaps by their education are the beſt qualified for that purpoſe?

An enlightened man never diſdains or deſpiſes but what is uſeleſs or hurtful. He reſpects every profeſſion which is beneficial

to

to ſociety; he knows that idleneſs is the only ſource of miſery and vice; and he laments to ſee a number of hands kept in a ſtate of inaction, by that ridiculous prejudice which prevents men of a certain claſs from employing their talents and abilities in promoting the wealth and happineſs of their country. But this prejudice, which, in the greater part of civiliſed nations, checks the progreſs of commerce, and is, without doubt, the real cauſe of all our evils and misfortunes, luckily does not exiſt in our colonies. We have every reaſon, therefore, to expect the higheſt advantages, if we can tranſport our knowledge and our arts to theſe diſtant climes. The fertility of Madagaſcar, and the valuable productions contained in the boſom of that important iſland, cannot fail of affording induſtry the means of eſtabliſhing a great and extenſive trade. It is under this point of view, according

cording to my ideas, that we ought in future to conſider ſuch ſettlements as we may wiſh to form at Madagaſcar. Though M. de Modave approached nearer to the accompliſhment of this object than any of his predeceſſors, it may be plainly ſeen, by his memoir, that his views were not founded upon a baſis ſufficiently ſolid, and capable of rendering the eſtabliſhment which he was commiſſioned to form, long, flouriſhing and happy. This was the opinion of M. Poivre. That truly celebrated man had conducted, with prudence, for ſeveral years, the French eſtabliſhments beyond the Cape of Good Hope, and had reſided a long time at Madagaſcar, in order to make himſelf acquainted with its moſt uſeful productions. He was intendant of the Iſles of France and Bourbon, at the time when M. de Modave began his ſettlement; and it may be readily imagined of what weight the opinion of

that gentleman, diſtinguiſhed by his virtues and knowledge, muſt have been. It is to his indefatigable zeal that France will ſoon be indebted for the advantage of ſharing with Holland in the rich commerce of ſpiceries. If this ſervice be not forgotten by future generations, the difficulties and trouble which that reſpectable citizen experienced, will ſerve to make his memory more illuſtrious. Always ardently anxious for the progreſs of knowledge and uſeful reſearches, he never ſuffered any opportunity of diffuſing inſtruction to eſcape him. He conſidered it as one of the firſt duties of an adminiſtrator, to exerciſe and excite the emulation of all thoſe in whom he perceived talents which he thought might be cultivated with advantage. He profited, above all, by thoſe of the celebrated Commerſon. That learned naturaliſt had accompanied M. de Bougainville in his

voyage

voyage round the world, and had formed an immenſe collection of plants, and of every object of natural hiſtory to be found in the countries which he had viſited. The relation of his voyage, therefore, was likely to afford a variety of intereſting obſervations; and he was well aſſured that if he went immediately to France, his uſeful labours would not remain unrewarded. He however renounced all theſe advantages as ſoon as he knew that M. Poivre wiſhed to employ him in procuring new information. After acquiring a thorough knowledge of the natural hiſtory of the Iſles of France and Bourbon, he proceeded to Madagaſcar in the year 1769, and M. de Modave, who was then governor of Fort Dauphin, gave him every aſſiſtance in his power to enable him to render farther ſervices to ſcience. It is much to be regretted that the accounts of theſe important diſco-

veries ſhould have been loſt or diſperſed after the death of this indefatigable man, who was carried off when he was just on the point of enjoying the fruits of his uſeful reſearches. I have been an eye witneſs to the wonderful activity of this learned man, who often ſpent whole nights in preparing and deſcribing the plants and other productions which he had collected under a ſcorching ſun. I doubt much whether any naturaliſt ever diſplayed more zeal or more extenſive knowledge. But what remains at preſent of that immenſe collection which he ſhewed us at the Iſle of France, and with the more ſatisfaction as it coſt him a great deal of labour?—Nothing, or at leaſt ſcarcely any thing. I can call to witneſs M. de Juſſieu, who was ſo kind as to tranſmit to me ſuch fragments of his valuable reſearches as he was able to procure. Theſe melancholy remains of the unwearied labours of a diſ-

a diſtinguiſhed philoſopher, contain nothing but remarks of little importance upon ſome plants deſcribed by Flacourt, in his Hiſtory of Madagaſcar. The only diſſertation any way intereſting concerns the Kimos, which I ſhall here tranſcribe, and add to it a ſhort memoir of M. de Modave on the ſame ſubject.

"Thoſe who are fond of the marvellous, "and who no doubt muſt be diſpleaſed "with me for having reduced the pretended "gigantic ſtature of the Patagonians to ſix "feet, will accept, perhaps, by way of in-"demnification, an account of a race of "pigmies who fall into the oppoſite ex-"treme. I here ſpeak of thoſe dwarfs, in "the interior parts of the large iſland of "Madagaſcar, who form a conſiderable "nation called, in the Madecaſſe language, "*Quimos* or *Kimos*. The diſtinguiſhing "characteriſtics of theſe ſmall people are,

" that they are whiter or at leaſt paler in
" colour, than all the negroes hitherto
" known; that their arms are ſo long that
" they can ſtretch their hands below their
" knees without ſtooping; and that the
" women have ſcarcely any breaſts, except
" when they ſuckle; and even then, we
" are aſſured, the greater part of them are ob-
" liged to make uſe of cow's milk in order
" to nouriſh their young. With regard
" to intellectual faculties, theſe Kimos are
" not inferior to the other inhabitants of
" Madagaſcar, who are known to be very
" lively and ingenious, though they aban-
" don themſelves to the utmoſt indolence;
" but we are told, that the Kimos, as they
" are much more active, are alſo much more
" warlike, ſo that their courage being, if we
" may uſe the expreſſion, in the double
" ratio of their ſtature, they have never
" yet been overcome by their neighbours,

" who

"who have often made attempts for that "purpoſe. Though attacked with ſupe- "rior ſtrength and weapons, for they are "not acquainted with the uſe of gunpowder "and fire-arms, like their enemies, they "have always fought with courage, and "retained liberty amidſt their rocks, which, "as they are extremely difficult of acceſs, "certainly contribute very much to their "ſafety. They live there upon rice, va- "rious kinds of fruits, roots and vegetables, "and rear a great number of oxen and "ſheep with large tails, which form alſo a "part of their ſubſiſtence. They hold no "communication with the different caſtes "by whom they are ſurrounded, either for "the ſake of commerce or on any account "whatever, as they procure all their neceſ- "ſaries from the lands which they poſſeſs. "As the object of all the petty wars, be- "tween them and the other inhabitants of

" the iſland, is to carry away on either ſide
" a few cattle or ſlaves, the diminutive ſize
" of the Kimos ſaves them from the latter
" injury. With regard to the former, they
" are ſo fond of peace that they reſolve to
" endure it to a certain degree; that is to
" ſay, till they ſee from the tops of their
" mountains a formidable body advancing,
" with every hoſtile preparation, in the
" plains below. They then carry the ſu-
" perfluity of their flocks to the entrance of
" the defiles, where they leave them; and,
" as they ſay themſelves, make a voluntary
" ſacrifice of them to the indigence of their
" elder brethren; but at the ſame time de-
" nouncing with the ſevereſt threats to at-
" tack them without mercy ſhould they
" endeavour to penetrate farther into their
" territories: a proof that it is neither from
" weakneſs nor cowardice, that they pur-
" chaſe tranquillity by preſents. Their

" weapons

" weapon are aſſagays and darts, which they
" uſe with the utmoſt dexterity. It is pre-
" tended, if they could, according to their
" ardent wiſhes, hold any intercourſe with
" the Europeans, and procure from them
" fire-arms and ammunition, they would
" act on the offenſive as well as the defen-
" ſive againſt their neighbours, who would
" then perhaps think themſelves very happy
" to preſerve peace.

" At the diſtance of two or three days
" journey from Fort Dauphin, the inhabi-
" tants of that part of the country ſhew a
" number of ſmall barrows or earthen hil-
" locks, in the form of graves, which, as is
" ſaid, owe their origin to a great maſſacre
" of the Kimos, who were defeated in the
" field by their anceſtors *. However this

* I am ſurpriſed that M. de Commerſon did not endeavour to aſcertain the truth of this fact, by digging up the earth of ſome of theſe barrows.

" may be, a tradition generally believed in
" that diſtrict, as well as in the whole iſland
" of Madagaſcar, of the actual exiſtence of
" the Kimos, leaves us no room to doubt
" that a part at leaſt of what we are told
" reſpecting theſe people is true. It is
" aſtoniſhing that every thing which we
" know of this nation is collected from
" their neighbours; that no one has yet
" made obſervations on the ſpot where they
" reſide; and that neither the governor of
" the iſles of France and Bourbon, nor the
" commanders at the different ſettlements
" which the French poſſeſſed on the coaſt
" of Madagaſcar, ever attempted to pene-
" trate into the interior parts of the coun-
" try, with a view of adding this diſcovery
" to many others which they might have
" made at the ſame time.

" To return to the Kimos, I can declare,
" as being an eye witneſs, that in the

" voyage

" voyage which I made to Fort Dauphin,
" about the end of the year 1770, the
" Count de Modave, the laſt governor, who
" had already communicated to me part of
" his obſervations, at length afforded me
" the ſatisfaction of ſeeing among his ſlaves
" a Kimos woman, aged about thirty, and
" three feet ſeven inches in height. Her
" complexion was indeed the faireſt I had
" ſeen among the inhabitants of the iſland;
" and I remarked that ſhe was well limbed
" though ſo low of ſtature, and far from
" being ill-proportioned; that her arms
" were exceedingly long, and could reach
" without bending the body as far as the
" knee; that her hair was ſhort and woolly;
" that her features, which were agreeable,
" approached nearer to thoſe of an European
" than to an inhabitant of Madagaſcar;
" and that ſhe had naturally a pleaſant
" look, and was good humoured, ſenſible,

" and

"and obliging, as far as could be judged "from her behaviour. With regard to "breaſts, I ſaw no appearance of them ex- "cept the nipples: but this ſingle obſerva- "tion is not at all ſufficient to eſtabliſh a "variation from the common laws of na- "ture.

"A little before our departure from Ma- "dagaſcar, a deſire of recovering her li- "berty, as much as a dread of being car- "ried away from her native country, in- "duced this little ſlave to make her eſcape "into the woods.

"Every thing conſidered, I am inclined "firmly to believe in this new variety of "the human ſpecies, who have their cha- "racteriſtic marks as well as their peculiar "manners, and who inhabit mountains "from ſixteen to eighteen hundred fathoms "high above the level of the ſea.

"Diminution of ſtature, in reſpect to

"that

" that of the Laplanders, is almoſt graduated " as from the Laplander to the Kimos. " Both inhabit the coldeſt regions and the " higheſt mountains in the world. Thoſe " of Madagaſcar, where the Kimos live, " are, as I have already obſerved, ſixteen or " eighteen hundred fathoms high above the " level of the ſea. The vegetable productions " which grow on theſe elevated places ap- " pear to be ſtunted, ſuch as the pine, the " birch, and a great many others, which " from the claſs of trees deſcend to that of " humble ſhrubs, merely becauſe they have " become alpicoles, that is to ſay, inhabitants " of the higheſt mountains."

To this extract from Mr. Commerſon's Memoir on the Kimos, I ſhall add a few obſervations by M. de Modave on the ſame ſubject.

" When I arrived," ſays he, " at Fort " Dauphin, in 1768, an ill-written memoir " was

" was tranſmitted to me, which contained " ſome particulars concerning a ſingular " people, called in the language of Mada- " gaſcar the Kimos, who inhabit the mid- " dle of the iſland, about the twenty-ſecond " degree of latitude. I had heard mention " of them ſeveral times before, but in ſo " confuſed a manner that I ſcarcely paid " any attention to a fact which deſerves to " be cleared up, and which relates to a na- " tion of dwarfs, who live in ſociety, go- " verned by a chief, and protected by civil " laws.

" I had found in the relation of Flacourt " a paſſage reſpecting this nation; but it " made no impreſſion on my mind, becauſe " Flacourt rejects the hiſtory of theſe pigmy " people as a fable, invented by the players " on the *herraou*, a kind of buffoons, or ra- " ther impoſtors, who ſpend their time in " reciting abſurd tales and romances.

" Flacourt

"Flacourt calls theſe dwarfiſh people "pigmies, and mixes their hiſtory with "that of a pretended race of giants, who, "as the ancient tradition of Madagaſcar "aſſures us, occaſioned formerly great ra- "vage in the iſland. Flacourt relates, after "theſe players on the *berraha*, that the "pigmies ſome time ago invaded the coun- "try of Anoſſi, from which they were "driven by the Etanos, who are the origi- "nal inhabitants of that diſtrict. The "Etanos ſurrounded the pigmies on the "banks of the river Itapera, and having "maſſacred them all, afterwards heaped "together in that ſpot a multitude of ſtones, "to cover the bodies of their enemies, and "to ſerve as monuments of the victory "which they had gained over them.

"After procuring at Fort Dauphin and "the neighbourhood all the information "poſſible, I reſolved to ſend a detachment

"to discover the country of these pigmies. "The detail of this expedition is consigned "to my journal; but, either on account of "the infidelity of the guides, or their want "of courage, it was not attended with "success. I had, however, the pleasure to "ascertain the existence of a nation of "dwarfs, who inhabit a certain district of "the island.

"These people are called *Quimos* or "*Kimos*. The ordinary height of the men "is three feet five inches, and that of the "women a few inches less. The men "wear their beards long, and cut in a round "form. The Kimos are thick and squat; "the colour of their skin is lighter than "that of the other islanders; and their hair "is short and woolly. They manufacture "iron and steel, of which they make lances "and assagays. These are the only arms "which they employ to defend themselves

" from their enemies, who attempt to carry " off their cattle. When they perceive " bands of travellers preparing to traverſe " their country, they tie their oxen to trees " on the frontiers, and leave other provi- " ſions, in order that theſe ſtrangers may " find the means of ſubſiſting. When the " ſtrangers, however, are ſo imprudent as " to moleſt them, by behaving in a hoſtile " manner, and are not contented with the " preſents uſual in the like circumſtances, " the dwarfiſh Kimos know how to defend " themſelves bravely, and repel by force " thoſe who have the temerity to attempt " to penetrate into the valley where they " reſide, and to which acceſs is extremely " difficult.

" Remouzai, who, in quality of captain, " followed the father of the chief Maimbou, " in the two unfortunate expeditions which " he undertook againſt theſe people, in

" order

" order to carry away a part of their flocks,
" and afterwards ſell them at Fort Dauphin,
" told me, that he owed his ſafety merely
" to the knowledge he had of the high and
" ſteep mountains by which their valley is
" ſurrounded. Remouzai had been ſeveral
" times among the Kimos, and was em-
" ployed as a guide by Maimbou's father,
" when he ventured to attack them. The
" firſt incurſion had no ſucceſs, but the ſe-
" cond was much more fatal: Maimbou's
" brother was killed; his ſmall army was
" put to flight; and the number of thoſe
" who eſcaped theſe pigmies was very in-
" conſiderable. Notwithſtanding all my
" reſearches, I could never find any perſon
" except Remouzai, who was able to give
" me any certain accounts reſpecting theſe
" two incurſions.

" Maimbou, with whom I had a good
" deal of intercourſe, for the purpoſe of
" procuring

"procuring proviſions to Fort Dauphin, "was not old enough to accompany his fa- "ther in this expedition; but he had con- "ceived ſuch an averſion to the Kimos, that "he fell into a violent paſſion whenever "I mentioned them in his preſence; and "he wiſhed me to exterminate that race of "apes, for ſuch was the injurious appella- "tion which he always beſtowed upon "them.

"A chief of the Mahaffalles, a people "reſiding near the Bay of St. Auguſtine, "who came from a chief in the neighbour- "hood of the fort, with a view of exchanging "ſilk and other merchandize for oxen, ſaid, "in the hearing of one of my officers, that "he had been ſeveral times in the country "of the Kimos, and that he had even car- "ried on war againſt them. This chief "added, that for ſome years, theſe people "had been haraſſed by their neighbours,

" who had burnt ſeveral of their villages.
" He boaſted, alſo, of having in his poſſeſ-
" ſion a man and a woman of that race,
" who he ſaid were about the age of twenty,
" or twenty-five.

" From the accounts of this chief and
" Remouzai, I am inclined to think, that
" the valley of the Kimos is abundant in
" cattle and proviſions of every kind. Theſe
" little people are induſtrious, and apply
" with much ſkill and labour to the culti-
" vation of the earth. Their chief enjoys
" a much more abſolute authority, and is
" more reſpected, than any of the other
" chiefs in the different diſtricts of Mada-
" gaſcar. I was not able to learn the extent
" of the valley which they inhabit. I know
" only that it is ſurrounded by very high
" mountains; that it is ſituated at the diſ-
" tance of ſixty leagues to the north-weſt of
" Fort Dauphin; and that it is bounded on

" the

" the weſt by the country of the Matatanes.
" Their villages are built on the ſummits of
" ſmall ſteep mounts, which are ſo much
" the more difficult to be aſcended, as
" they have multiplied thoſe obſtacles that
" render approach to them almoſt impracticable. The chief of the Mahaffalles and
" Remouzai did not agree reſpecting two
" points which are particularly worthy of being aſcertained. The general opinion of the
" people of Madagaſcar is, that the Kimos
" women have no breaſts, and that they
" nouriſh their children with cows milk. It
" is aſſerted, alſo, that they have no menſtrual flux; but that at thoſe periods
" when other women are ſubject to this evacuation, the ſkin of their body becomes
" of a blood-red colour. Remouzai aſſured
" me that this opinion was well founded;
" but the chief of the Mahaffalles contradicted it. We muſt, therefore, ſuſpend

" our judgment on this head; and be cau-
" tious in giving credit to phænomena which
" appear to deviate ſo much from general
" rules, and to extend to a certain number
" of individuals only.

" I procured a Kimos woman, who was
" taken in war, ſome years ago, by a chief of
" the province of Mandrarey. This woman
" is rather of a tall ſtature, conſidering the
" general meaſure allowed to the females of
" her nation; yet her height does not ex-
" ceed three feet ſeven inches. She is be-
" tween thirty and thirty-two years of age;
" her arms are very long; her hands have
" a great reſemblance to the paws of an
" ape; and her boſom is as flat as that of
" the leaneſt man, without the leaſt ap-
" pearance of breaſts. My little Kimos was
" remarkably thin and meagre when ſhe
" arrived at Fort Dauphin; but when ſhe
" was able to gratify her voracious appetite,

" ſhe

" ſhe became extremely luſty; and I am of " opinion, that when ſhe is in her natural " ſtate, her features will be well worth a " careful obſervation. The chief who ſold " me this Kimos woman told me, that he " had a Kimos man at home, and that he " would endeavour to ſend him to me.

" Had the enterpriſe I undertook a few " months ago ſucceeded better, I ſhould cer- " tainly have embraced the opportunity of " ſending to France a male and female of " theſe pigmies; but I hope to be more for- " tunate in future. It is certainly nothing " wonderful to meet with dwarfs in a coun- " try ſo vaſt and extenſive as the iſland of " Madagaſcar, the ſurface of which contains " various climates, and abounds with a mul- " titude of different productions; but a real " race of pigmies, living in ſociety, is a " phænomenon that cannot well be paſſed " over in ſilence."

To theſe accounts of M. de Modave, and M. de Commerſon, might be added that of an officer who procured a Kimos, whom, as he told me, he wiſhed to carry to France; but M. de Surville, who commanded the veſſel in which he had taken his paſſage, would not permit him.

After ſuch authentic teſtimonies, is it not aſtoniſhing that Flacourt ſhould have treated as fables, every thing that concerns the exiſtence of theſe people? Let not, therefore, the authority of this man, ſuſpicious in every reſpect, on account of his implacable hatred againſt the Madecaſſes, be any more oppoſed to incontrovertible facts. The iſlanders of Madagaſcar are a people neither worthleſs nor ſtupid, becauſe their manners are contrary to ours, and becauſe they think proper to trace out fantaſtical figures on their bodies. Cuſtoms and uſages differ according to climates. Man every where takes

takes a pleaſure in diſfiguring himſelf in a thouſand various ways. The Indian lengthens his ears; the Chineſe cruſhes his noſe, and flattens his forehead; and if we narrowly enquire into theſe childiſh conceits, we ſhall perhaps find, that man in a ſtate of civiliſation, is guilty of much greater abſurdities than the ſavage.

The iſlanders of Madagaſcar are neither villains nor thieves, becauſe we find them victims to the moſt fatal prejudices, and the moſt ridiculous ſuperſtitions. There is no country on the face of the earth which has not its fables and chimeras. Every where you will ſee men invoking ſpirits, confiding in the power of amulets, and giving credit to the abſurd reveries of judicial aſtrology. It is certainly not amongſt civiliſed nations that this ſpirit of infatuation has occaſioned the feweſt evils. When ſuperſtition is added to the multiplied vices of large ſocieties, its

poiſon acquires more ſtrength and activity. Let us leave to Flacourt the barren taſk of preſenting a melancholy picture of the ſuperſtitious practices of the Madecaſſes: this ſubject would afford no uſeful leſſon to the reader. Ought we to be aſtoniſhed, that a weak and tender being, expoſed from his cradle to a number of infirmities, ſhould, during the ſhort period of his inconceivable exiſtence, err reſpecting the cauſe of thoſe calamities which oppreſs him? Is it matter of ſurpriſe, that the ſavage, in the delirium of his deranged imagination, ſhould have recourſe to chimeras of every kind, in order to avert the dangers with which he is threatened? Hurricanes ravage the fields which he has cultivated; lightning ſtrikes the ſhelter he has formed; the earth opens under his feet, and, by dreadful and convulſive motions, ſwallows up in an inſtant vaſt tracts of country. Amidſt ſo many

diſaſters,

diſaſters, can the Madecaſſe remain an unfeeling and ſtupid ſpectator of his calamities? Certainly not—and the leſs enlightened he is, the more will his mind be filled with terror. He will aſcribe theſe great cataſtrophes, which ſeem to threaten the earth with deſtruction, to the anger of an inviſible being who governs it; he will endeavour to appeaſe him by prayers and ſacrifices; and, miſtaking the nature of that worſhip which he owes to the Deity, he will invent, in his folly, the moſt childiſh, abſurd, and often even ſanguinary practices. It is only through the effect of that ſpirit of infatuation, from which no people are free, that the Malegaches appear to us more criminal than canibals, when, by the moſt culpable ſuperſtition, they expoſe to the teeth of ferocious animals, according to the deciſion of the ombiaſſes, their new-born children. Theſe impoſtors obſerve the aſpect of the planets,

and

and condemn new-born children to loſe their lives, when the moment of their birth has been judged unpropitious. The months of March and April, the laſt week of every month, every Wedneſday and Friday of the year, are days of proſcription; ſo that for nearly one half of the year, the population of Madagaſcar is deſtroyed in its ſource. The inhuman decree of the ombiaſſes, however, is not always executed. Fathers more affectionate, and leſs ſuperſtitious, often cauſe theſe unhappy and innocent victims, when publicly abandoned in the foreſts, to be privately carried away by faithful ſervants, and avert by ſacrifices the malignity of the ſtar which preſided over their birth.

But let us draw a veil over theſe ſcenes of horror, at which human nature revolts. Ought we not, for the honour of humanity, to conſign to oblivion ſo barbarous and criminal a practice? Of what irregularities is

not

not ignorant and credulous man capable? The fulneſs of our errors is, if I dare uſe the expreſſion, that of our miſeries. Ignorance increaſes, but knowledge baniſhes them. Man is either a very new being on the earth, or the earth has experienced many great revolutions; for, if we reflect ever ſo little on the feeble ray which illuminates the moſt enlightened nations, can we diſſemble our profound ignorance, and not know that we have as yet ſcarcely emerged from chaos? What the moſt learned man knows, is ſo little indeed, that none but vain and ſuperficial minds can boaſt of it. The fear of exaggerating our progreſs in the ſtudy of the moral and phyſical ſciences ought not, however, to render us unjuſt towards the preſent age. The rights of man are now better underſtood; the cauſes of the moſt alarming phænomena are no longer a myſtery; and our progreſs in

mathe-

mathematics and philoſophy has unveiled to us ſecrets which nature ſeemed to have placed beyond the reach of our weak underſtandings. The path to be purſued in future reſearches, is already traced out to us; and thoſe who wiſh to tread in it, need not be afraid of bewildering themſelves: the limits of thoſe things which are probable, doubtful, or certain, reſt upon a foundation that cannot be ſhaken. Truth is not like error, ſuſceptible of a variety of forms: it appears only under one; and never eſcapes thoſe who ſearch for it with integrity of heart and ſolidity of judgment; but it flies from thoſe frivolous mortals who affix a value to objects which have none. Such grovelling beings eſteem only thoſe ſuperfluities which ſerve to pamper vanity and luxury: they muſt, conſequently, invent, and ſet a value upon, ſophiſms calculated to conceal from the eyes of the multitude, the

fatal effects of their deſtructive purſuits. Theſe corrupted men, ſlaves to prejudices, the abſurdity of which is hid merely by the ſplendor that ſurrounds them, ſubſtitute contempt for the love of humanity. Reaſon deſerted, has no influence over their actions. With a deceitful outſide, eaſy manners, an apparent ſenſibility, and a ſcrupulous attention to follow faſhions, cuſtoms, and opinions, one may attempt every thing in ſociety; one may ſucceſsfully attack whatever is held moſt ſacred among men; and become an advocate for debauchery, luxury, and ſlavery. Who, for example, has not repeatedly heard in company, thoſe deteſtable ſophiſms which change, as we may ſay, the moſt deſtructive vices and prejudices into virtues? Such weak minds and corrupted hearts are certainly for ever excluded from the ſanctuary of true philoſophy. The ſavage is much leſs diſtant from it than they.

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He who freely confeſſes that he knows nothing, is much nearer inſtruction than the greater part of thoſe preſumptuous characters, who, though ſcarcely acquainted with the elements of knowledge, decide on the moſt difficult and complex ſubjects, without being checked by a conſciouſneſs of their own inſignificance. During the time I reſided at Madagaſcar, I never ceaſed making experiments on theſe iſlanders; the reſult of which proved to me, how eaſy it is to give them juſt notions of our ſciences. I had occaſion to be ſurpriſed at the aſtoniſhing facility with which they comprehend the general cauſes of thoſe phænomena which ought to alarm and ſurpriſe them moſt. However little verſed people may be in the mathematics, they know the method which muſt be purſued in order to diffuſe them. Is it not by cultivating them that Europe has emerged, almoſt ſuddenly,

from a ſtate worſe than that of ignorance? It is to this ſalutary ſtudy we are indebted for the fall of that falſe ſyſtem of inſtruction, which teaches only errors and abſurdities. But, in order that we may derive the higheſt poſſible benefit from this happy change, fear, the daughter of ignorance, and the inexhauſtible ſource of illuſion, muſt be expelled from the face of the earth: it muſt return to that nothing from which it ſprung, for the misfortune of the human race. Has it then fixed its roots ſo deep in the mind as to render it impoſſible to extirpate them? Is it thought a matter of ſo much difficulty to perſuade ſavages that great diſaſters are only a neceſſary conſequence of the laws of motion? Shall the philoſopher direct, at pleaſure, by means of conductors, the fire of heaven; ſhall he draw down from the clouds, by the help of electric kites, the electric matter which is there concentered;

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and thoſe who witneſs ſuch deciſive experiments, not acknowledge the utility of the ſtudy of nature? When the ſavage beholds theſe, he will then ceaſe to be terrified by the awful noiſe of thunder; he will judge, though unacquainted with its cauſe, that it is not unknown to the philoſopher, who has been able to render himſelf maſter of it; and this conſideration will be ſufficient to free him from uneaſineſs. The caſe will be the ſame with regard to the effects of volcanoes and earthquakes, if he be ſhewn ſpontaneous exploſions, convulſive motions, and ſimilar effects in ſubſtances which are familiar to his ſenſes. We muſt not ſuppoſe the ideas of man ſo confined as not to follow even complex reaſoning, when it is founded on experience. I am well aware, that, in civiliſed countries, an innumerable multitude, employed only in providing for their ſubſiſtence by conti-

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nual labour, and involuntary exertions, have not time to counteract thoſe erroneous opinions which are inculcated into their minds from their infancy; but ſavage people, inhabiting fertile countries, are not in the like ſituation: they are fond of inſtruction; they have leiſure for attending to it: and this is an advantage, certainly, which cannot be conteſted.

OF THE NORTH-EAST PART OF MADAGASCAR.

THE north-eaſt part of the iſland of Madagaſcar is a rich magazine for the colonies in the Iſles of France and Bourbon. The moſt frequented ports in this part, are Foulepointe, St. Mary, and the Bay of Antongil. It is in theſe three places that the French have attempted to form all their eſtabliſhments. A ſoldier in the ſervice of the Eaſt-India Company, whoſe name was Bigorne, gave me ſome intereſting informa-

tion reſpecting the ſettlements of the pirates in theſe diſtricts. This man had gained the affection of the iſlanders, and by a long reſidence amongſt them had acquired a kind of influence over theſe people, from which the directors of the Iſles of France and Bourbon, for a long time, derived great advantages. It was from this man that I procured the greater part of my knowledge reſpecting the productions, as well as the manners and cuſtoms of the inhabitants of the north-eaſt part of Madagaſcar.

The inhabitants of this coaſt are ſtill better, and more humane than thoſe of the province of Carcanoſſi. Theſe harmleſs people uſe neither locks nor bolts, and ſhut the doors of their houſes with nothing elſe than thorns, or the branches of trees. Were they even filled with riches, they would leave them in the ſame manner, nor entertain any dread of their being robbed. Their houſes, how-

however, are conſtructed only of leaves and matts, which might be broke through without much difficulty.

The pirates, who carried on their depredations in the Indian ſeas, alarmed at the great preparations which were making to put an end to their robbery, took refuge on the north-eaſt coaſt of Madagaſcar. It appears that they formed their eſtabliſhment at the iſle of Noſſy-Hibrahim, named by the French St. Mary. One of the extremities of this iſland reaches within eleven leagues of Foulepointe, and the other extends to the Bay of Antongil.

By contracting alliances with the iſlanders, the pirates gained their confidence and friendſhip. It may, perhaps, appear ſurpriſing that men who followed ſo infamous a profeſſion ſhould not have been more deteſted. This foreign land became to them and their children a new country: they

aſſumed its manners, and adopted its cuſtoms. In fertile and rich regions, abounding in every thing neceſſary for ſubſiſtence, it is almoſt impoſſible to find any advantage by attacking the property of another; ſince the only riches of the inhabitants are thoſe of the ſoil, and the ſoil belongs in common to all. It is not aſtoniſhing, therefore, that pirates returning continually to this place of ſhelter, to repair and re-victual their ſhips, ſhould be favourably received by the Malegaches, ſince they ſhared in their opulence, without knowing how they acquired it. They compared the conduct of theſe wretches with that of the crews of ſeveral European veſſels, and the compariſon was by no means favourable to the latter, who had more than once procured refreſhments by force, and who had exerciſed the moſt barbarous cruelties againſt the natives, burning their villages, or deſtroying them with their

their cannon, when they did not bring them oxen, fowls, and rice, as expeditiouſly as they required. The people of Foulepointe have not yet forgotten, and often relate, that, at the beginning of this century, the crew of an European veſſel invited a multitude of the iſlanders into a large tent, and the moment it was filled, the timber-work fell down, ſo that by this ſtratagem the Europeans were able to ſeize a great number of them, whom they made ſlaves. Were I diſpoſed to paſs over ſuch crimes in ſilence, I ſhould think it uſeful to make mention of them, in order to ſhew how many evils and atrocities our European predeceſſors have left us to repair.

The pirates continued their depredations with ſucceſs till the year 1722; but, at this period, ſeveral nations, alarmed by the enormous loſſes which their commerce ſuſtained, united together to deliver the Indian

ſeas from the oppreſſion of theſe formidable tyrants, who had ſeized a large Portugueſe veſſel, in which were count de Receira and the archbiſhop of Goa, and the ſame day another veſſel which carried thirty-two guns. Both theſe valuable prizes were captured before the Iſle of Bourbon.

The pirates, accuſtomed to war, and elated with their ſucceſs, made a long and deſperate reſiſtance. Before they were extirpated it was neceſſary to bring a conſiderable force againſt them; to terrify them by the ſevereſt puniſhment, and to purſue them through the moſt imminent dangers, even to the place of their retreat, where they were obliged to ſet fire to their veſſels:—ſuch were the ſevere means employed to clear the Indian ſeas of theſe plunderers, who had infeſted them from the time that Vaſco de Gama opened a paſſage to India, by the Cape of Good Hope. The entire deſtruc-

tion of their maritime forces prevented the pirates from interrupting commerce any more, and compelled them to quit the wretched eſtabliſhment which they had formed at St. Mary, an iſland in the neighbourhood of Madagaſcar.

Theſe banditti, however, being thus forced to renounce their former wandering kind of life, began to think of ſignaliſing themſelves by new acts of atrocity. As they could no longer exerciſe with advantage their infamous employment, in fertile countries where all property is confounded, and being too inferior in number to ſubdue the iſlanders, one would have thought that no other means of doing miſchief were left for them than to attempt to promote diſcord among the inhabitants: but had they confined themſelves merely to the exciting of quarrels and war among the Malegaches, this flame probably would have been ſoon

extinguiſhed; and when tranquillity had enabled theſe iſlanders to ſee their real intereſts, they would certainly not have failed to attack the pirates, and to be revenged on them for their perfidy. It was neceſſary, therefore, for the ſucceſs of their pernicious deſigns, that they ſhould render war advantageous to theſe people; and the ſale of priſoners, that is to ſay, a trade in ſlaves, anſwered two ends to them, that of fomenting and perpetuating diviſions among the Malegaches, and that of procuring a new mode of enriching themſelves, and of cauſing them to be courted and protected by European nations, who favoured this deteſtable traffic. By this new crime the pirates terminated their courſe of robbery—a crime which depopulates and ſtill deſolates the iſland of Madagaſcar. This deſtructive ſcourge, ſince the moment of its birth, has not ceaſed a moment to acquire new degrees

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of vigour and activity. It would be as difficult to foretel the period when it will end as to eſtimate the ravages to which it has given riſe. Of all the evils and all the diſorders occaſioned by the pirates, the greateſt, without doubt, is that of having introduced the ſlave-trade into Madagaſcar; and yet I ſhould think I diſgraced my pen, did I allow myſelf to trace out the picture of the atrocious cruelties they exerciſed, and the infamous ſtratagems they practiſed. The ſlave-trade is an inſtitution ſo much the more abominable as the evils which it produces are ſcarcely felt by thoſe who derive profit from them. It would ſeem as if it required long ſtudy and meditation to diſcover that liberty is connected with the eſſence and dignity of man; and that it is the height of injuſtice to have converted it, if I may uſe the expreſſion, into a ſaleable commodity. If this truth does not make

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that impreſſion which it ought on enlightened nations, and force them to proſcribe ſlavery, how can they flatter themſelves that it will be perceived by ſavages involved in the darkneſs of ignorance? We cannot, therefore, be ſurpriſed that the Malegaches, ſtruck with the advantages which they continually derive from the ſale of ſlaves, ſtill entertain a grateful remembrance of theſe infamous men, to whom they think they are indebted for the greater part of their riches.

Before theſe banditti eſtabliſhed themſelves in the iſland, cattle and ſheep were of no value. Rice and various kinds of proviſions had no other price than that which was affixed on them by navigators; and it even appears, that during the time of their piracy, they ſpent in drunkenneſs and debauchery, on their return from every expedition, the fruits of their long voyages.

Want of foreſight is not uncommon among men

men accuſtomed to a wandering and diſſipated life. The extreme profuſion of theſe profligates is, therefore, no matter of ſurpriſe; but being more deceitful than prodigal, it is no wonder that they always carefully endeavoured to conceal from theſe iſlanders the impure ſource from which they derived their riches. This, perhaps, is the only point on which they were forced to be prudent, under pain of incurring the hatred of theſe people, whoſe friendſhip it was their intereſt to preſerve.

A recital of their ſhameful and deteſtable robberies would have carried terror and alarm into thoſe countries, where the leaſt of theſe crimes was puniſhed with death. It is not to be doubted that the Malegaches would have exterminated ſuch dangerous gueſts had they been fully acquainted with their vicious inclinations: but ſince their memory is not execrated, and has not left

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in the minds of theſe people any traces of their infamy, they muſt have ſeduced them by a profound diſſimulation, and a deceitful appearance of confidence and affection. And how could ſavages poſſeſs ſufficient knowledge of mankind to be able to unmaſk villains, exerciſed from their infancy in falſehood and cunning, and whoſe intereſt it was to conceal, or diſguiſe the greater part of their vices?

I confeſs that this explanation alone can afford ſatisfaction, after the vain efforts which I made on the ſpot, with a view to diſcover the true cauſe of that kind of reſpect, or rather veneration, which the Malegaches entertain for the memory of theſe infamous plunderers.

It was not at the time when the pirates were employed ſolely in ravaging the Indian ſeas that they were able to occaſion great diſorder at Madagaſcar; their ſtay in that

iſland was always very ſhort, and being obliged to repair their veſſels ſpeedily, and to procure proviſions, they could not think of ſowing diviſion among theſe people, who might have revenged themſelves during their abſence on their women and children, and have entirely ruined their eſtabliſhments; and it was only at certain periods that they could give themſelves up to all the exceſſes of drunkenneſs and debauchery. But when they were forced to renounce their infamous profeſſion, they followed a plan of life entirely different. Their views then were directed towards the means of recovering a part of thoſe riches which they had imprudently diſſipated, and to ſecure the protection of the Europeans by opening to them a branch of commerce, with the extent and importance of which they were well acquainted. Theſe profligates, therefore, were the firſt who introduced

troduced the ſlave-trade into the north-eaſt part of Madagaſcar. This we are told by all the traditions of the country, and it was confirmed to me by La Bigorne. It was not, however, without cauſing much trouble and diſorder that they were able, about the year 1722, to overcome the averſion which the Malegaches had for that horrid traffic. Before this epoch ſeveral European ſhips had made vain efforts to induce them to ſell their priſoners and malefactors. Their negociations for this purpoſe, inſtead of being attended with ſucceſs, were rejected with indignation, and ſometimes puniſhed in an exemplary manner when they ventured to employ ſtratagem or force. The pirates were too well acquainted with the intrepid ſpirit of the Malegaches to uſe theſe means; and they were ſenſible that they were too few in number to ſubdue them, or to dictate to them concerning a trade which

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they deteſted. The leaſt violence, in this reſpect, would have occaſioned their deſtruction; and with ſtill more certainty that of their wives and children. The ſureſt way of accompliſhing their end, therefore, was to kindle up amongſt theſe people the flames of diſcord; and, taking advantage of their inteſtine wars, to prevail on them to diſpoſe of their priſoners, who, on account of their number, could not fail of being a burthen to them. But it was of the utmoſt importance to the ſucceſs of their views in the midſt of theſe diſorders, to be on a good footing with both parties, and to aſſume in appearance the office of mediators. It was requiſite, alſo, that they ſhould wait for a favourable opportunity, or at leaſt a plauſible pretext for putting their odious plot in execution, and this was not long wanting.

The Bethalimenes, a people in the interior part of the country, had quitted their

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villages, and had flocked in great numbers towards the place where the pirates lived, with a view of procuring different articles of commerce, which they conſidered either as uſeful or convenient. They particularly ſought for the beautiful ſtuffs of India, Maſulipatam handkerchiefs, muſlins, and ſome other kinds of goods of leſs value. The inhabitants on the ſea coaſt, known under the name of Antivarres and Manivoulefe, beheld theſe ſtrangers amongſt them with great pleaſure; and they would have thought themſelves deficient both in that hoſpitality and affection which they owed to the pirates, had they in the leaſt interrupted their commerce, or prevented them from procuring ſuch cattle and proviſions as were neceſſary for victualling their ſhips.

The Bethalimenes, who are a more economical and courageous people than the

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Antavarres and the Manivouleſe, when they ſaw that the ſource of the wealth of the pirates was exhauſted, by the abſolute deſtruction of their marine, began to prepare for returning to their villages with their riches. The Antavarres and the Manivouleſe would not have oppoſed their departure, had not the pirates uſed their utmoſt endeavours to excite them to plunder, by repreſenting to them, that theſe valuable effects which ought to be the reward of their labour and attachment, would be for ever loſt to them, if they ſuffered them to be carried away, and diſperſed in the interior parts of the country. After a long reſiſtance, founded ſolely on that reſpect which is due to hoſpitality, the Antavarres and the Manivouleſe ſuffered themſelves to be overcome, and hurried into an unjuſt war. This cruel war gave riſe to all thoſe which afterwards deluged the north-eaſt

part of Madagaſcar with blood. Before that period theſe people lived in peace, and thoſe petty diviſions of little importance which are inſeparable from all ſocieties, never were of long duration, and left behind them no traces of animoſity. The pirates were artful enough never to be ſeen in the armies of the Antavarres and the Manivouleſe, without aſſuming the appearance of the ſtricteſt neutrality. They, however, ſold at a very high price to theſe people, who were their friends, arms and warlike ammunition; but while they refuſed the like aſſiſtance to the Bethalimenes, they ſecretly adviſed them, in the moſt treacherous manner, to exchange with an European veſſel, newly arrived at Foulepointe, their priſoners for fire-arms and ammunition. The Bethalimenes, highly irritated at the exceſſes committed by the Antavarres and the Manivouleſe againſt them, eagerly followed

followed this advice. By making a brave defence they had taken a great number of priſoners; and as theſe priſoners were a burthen to them, they ſaw it would be advantageous to ſell them, in order to procure fire-arms, which were neceſſary to repel the attacks of their enemies.

The Bethalimenes were extremely thankful to the pirates for having taught them how to make the Antavarres and the Manivouleſe repent of their injuſtice, by enabling them to procure arms and ammunition, ſufficient to intimidate theſe diſturbers of their tranquillity. They even found themſelves much better provided with theſe articles than their enemies, who were now no longer in a condition to throw any obſtacles in the way of their departure. Theſe ſame iſlanders, therefore, who had always ſhewn the moſt invincible repugnance to ſell their priſoners, ſuddenly changed their

principles on this point; and yet theſe people conſider us as cannibals. The efforts which the Europeans had inceſſantly made to procure ſlaves, either by force or ſtratagem, contributed not a little to confirm them in this unfavourable opinion. The enemies of the whites, whoſe number was very conſiderable, took a pleaſure in giving ſtrength to this odious calumny; and I may venture to aſſert, that it has been perpetuated in ſuch a manner, from generation to generation, that it ſtill ſubſiſts. If any method can be deviſed of deſtroying ſo degrading an accuſation, it certainly muſt be by carefully educating amongſt us ſome young Madecaſſes, and afterwards ſending them back to their own country. When they have become acquainted with our manners, our arts, and our induſtry, we may eaſily inſpire them with quite contrary ſentiments. However little we reflect on the ſalutary con-

conſequences that would enſue from ſuch a plan, it will appear aſtoniſhing that it has been ſo long neglected.

If I have allowed myſelf to paſs over in ſilence the long ſeries of war which from that epoch never ceaſed to deſolate the northern part of Madagaſcar, I cannot help obſerving, that the pirates alone kindled up amongſt theſe iſlanders the flames of diſcord; and, at the ſame time, conciliated the affections of the Antavarres and the Manivouleſe, as well as that of the Betalimenes.

After this, the Europeans no longer diſdained to ſeek their protection. The public ſale of priſoners ſerved to foment the flames of their hatred and vengeance; and theſe two ſcourges united ſet no other bounds to their ravages than the entire depopulation of an iſland, celebrated by its extent and prodigious fertility. What a number of

victims sacrificed to the insatiable avarice of a few plunderers!

Ye just and compassionate, behold what it has cost, in blood and crimes, to bring your colonies to that kind of prosperity, the greater part of the advantages of which you daily hear exaggerated; as if that prosperity, always precarious, were not more apparent than real; since the opulence of a few is founded only on the misery and slavery of the multitude.

The slave-trade, after having served to establish the power of the pirates, was of no utility to their children.

Tamsimalo, son to the daughter of a powerful chief, by an old pirate, celebrated for his cunning and depredations, seized the sovereign power after the death of his father. His reign was signalized by no extraordinary event, but his memory is still venerated amongst these people; and his respected

ſpected aſhes repoſe at St. Mary, where they were depoſited in the year 1745, which was the period of his death.

Tamſimalo was ſucceeded by his ſon John Harre; but his power was very limited; and his miſconduct rendered him deſpicable in the eyes of his ſubjects. He made choice of Foulepointe for the place of his reſidence, and left the government of St. Mary to his mother and his ſiſter, the latter of whom was known under the name of Betie. A little time after the death of Tamſimalo, the Eaſt-India company formed an eſtabliſhment at St. Mary, and M. Goſſe was ordered to take poſſeſſion of that iſland in the name of the company. In this ceremony, M. Goſſe was accompanied by Betie, the daughter of Tamſimalo, and the widow of John Harre, though this honour, according to the uſages of the country, belonged to the widow of Tamſimalo, whoſe

ſovereignty was acknowledged. This haughty and imperious woman, highly offended at that kind of diſdain and neglect with which Goſſe ſeemed to treat her, ſwore that ſhe would be revenged on him for ſo open an inſult offered to her dignity. For a long time Goſſe deſpiſed her anger and threats; but this conduct was far from being prudent; and might have brought great misfortunes upon the eſtabliſhment entruſted to his care. Obſtinate fevers, and epidemical diſeaſes, ſoon after weakened the colony, and reduced it to a very languiſhing condition during the latter end of autumn. The directors of the Iſle of France were obliged, therefore, to ſend new recruits annually, to repair the loſſes which were occaſioned by the inſalubrity of the iſland. The mortality became ſo great towards the concluſion of the year, that it was then called the *Grave of the French*. The greateſt

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care, it is true, was taken to ſend no perſons thither to ſettle except ſuch as could occaſion little hurt to ſociety, if they periſhed.

If Goſſe was deficient in attention to the widow of Tamſimalo, he neglected, as we are aſſured, no means of pleaſing Betie. This charming young woman to an agreeable figure added a pleaſant diſpoſition; and the iſlanders entertained a much ſtronger affection for her than for her mother. Betie was not inſenſible to the attachment of Goſſe; and ſhe more than once diſconcerted the fatal projects of her mother againſt the French: but bounds were at length ſet to her zeal, over which it was impoſſible for her to paſs.

Tamſimalo's widow accuſed Goſſe of having dared to diſturb the aſhes of her huſband, and of carrying away the riches ſhut up in his tomb. This accuſation, whether juſt or unjuſt, excited ſuch a fermentation that

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the deſtruction of the French was from that moment irrevocably decreed. The iſlanders fell upon their eſtabliſhment, ſet fire to it, and made a general maſſacre of its inhabitants. As ſoon as this fatal event, which took place on Chriſtmas eve 1754, was known at the Iſle of France, an armed veſſel received orders to proceed to the entrance of port St. Mary, and to puniſh the iſlanders with the utmoſt ſeverity. The puniſhment inflicted on them was indeed terrible; a number of villages were burnt, and ſeveral large piroguas filled with the natives were ſunk. That in which the widow of Tamſimalo embarked, made ſtrong efforts to gain the Bay of Antongil, and to eſcape from the boats ſent in purſuit of her: but in ſpite of every exertion they got near enough to fire upon it. Tamſimalo's widow was killed; ſeveral of thoſe who accompanied her ſhared the ſame fate; and the reſt, among whom

whom was her daughter Betie, were taken priſoners. When Betie was carried to the Iſle of France, ſhe juſtified herſelf before the ſupreme council, by proving that her mother alone had been the cauſe of the maſſacre of the French. She ſhewed, at the ſame time, that her connection with Goſſe had endangered her life; and that ſhe could no longer be in ſafety at St. Mary, as ſhe had loſt, by her attachment to the French, and the efforts which ſhe had made to ſave them, the confidence and affection of the iſlanders. The ſupreme council of the Iſle of France, convinced of the innocence of this young woman, ſent her to her brother John Harre, at Foulepointe, with conſiderable preſents, requeſting her to employ every means poſſible to re-eſtabliſh peace and concord between the natives of that diſtrict and the French. Theſe people, terrified by the ravages exerciſed at St. Mary, had retired

tired to the interior parts of the country; all commerce was ſuſpended; and the wants of the Iſle of France required that every method ſhould be purſued to revive it. Betie, by the great aſcendancy ſhe had over her brother, being the propereſt perſon to accompliſh this ſalutary end, ſhe united, for that purpoſe, with Bigorne, an intelligent and active man, who had been a ſoldier in the ſervice of the Eaſt-India company.

In a little time, Bigorne learned the Malegache language; and by an open and ſteady conduct won the affection of the iſlanders. To his care and activity the colony was indebted for the re-eſtabliſhment of its commerce. Among all the honourable teſtimonies of gratitude which were rendered to him for this ſervice, the moſt diſtinguiſhed is that of M. Poivre, who, in 1758, was an eye-witneſs to the good con-

duct

duct of this brave ſoldier. That celebrated adminiſtrator, whoſe ſuffrages cannot be ſuſpected of prejudice or partiality, has often, in my preſence, paid the higheſt compliments to this man, whoſe memory is ſtill reſpected amongſt the iſlanders of Madagaſcar. The influence which he had over the minds of theſe people was, however, more owing to the goodneſs of his character than to his eloquence.

The ſpeeches which he made to theſe people, in their grand aſſemblies called *palabres*, were not to be compared to thoſe of the Malegache orators. M. Poivre, who aſſiſted at ſeveral of theſe aſſemblies, often told me, that the natural eloquence of the Malegaches was truly aſtoniſhing. He took delight in relating even the moſt minute particulars of a grand *palabre*, at which all the neighbouring chiefs, and an immenſe multitude of people,

people, were preſent, in order to form a treaty of commerce with the commiſſaries of the French Eaſt-India company.

The following is, in a few words, the account of it which he gave me:

The orator, after ſaluting all the chiefs, advanced towards the French; made a profound bow to them, and, addreſſing himſelf to Bigorne, ſaid: "You know, Bigorne, that "for more than eight years the white men "have come hither to trade with the Male-"gaches; and can you ſay that a white "man was ever killed by any of our na-"tion?

"We have always received you, not only "as brothers, but even as the lords of the "country.

"When the French aſked from us oxen "and rice, did we ever refuſe them?

"When they wiſhed to raiſe paliſades,

"and

"and to conſtruct houſes, have we not
"gone to the foreſts to procure timber ne-
"ceſſary for that purpoſe.

"Have thoſe who came hither before
"you, Bigorne, or thoſe who are here now,
"ever had any cauſe of complaint againſt
"us? Have they not drawn water from
"our fountains? Have they not cut down
"the trees of our foreſts, without any man
"at Foulepointe aſking them—why do
"you ſo? The people in the ſouth, as
"well as thoſe in the north, and more
"recently ſtill thoſe of St. Mary, maſſacred
"the French, and made war upon them;
"but thoſe of Foulepointe never attacked
"any of them; on the contrary they have
"given them every aſſiſtance in their power,
"and they have at all times teſtified their
"kindneſs and friendſhip towards them.

"Are the chiefs at Foulepointe then
"leſs powerful than their neighbours?

"La Bigorne, they are more ſo.—Do "they fear to carry on war againſt the "whites?—*No.*—Who dare make war on "John Harre, the illuſtrious ſon of Tamſi-"malo, our ſovereign and our father?

"What are the white men who would "be raſh enough to attack thoſe formidable "and invincible chiefs, here preſent, *Ma-"rouat Ramiſi* and *Ramatao?*

"Would we not ſhed even the laſt drop "of our blood in their ſupport?

"It is to our friendſhip, therefore, and "to our goodneſs of heart alone, that the "French are indebted for the kind treat-"ment which they have experienced at "Foulepointe, ſince they firſt frequented "that port.

"Let us now examine the conduct of "the French towards us.

"Why, Bigorne, haſt thou erected a "paliſade of large ſtakes, much more ex-

"tenſive

"tenſive, and ſtronger, than that which
"was erected formerly, without having
"deigned to aſk permiſſion of John Harre
"and the other chiefs? In this haſt thou
"followed the ancient uſage? Speak—
"Anſwer—Haſt thou offered them the
"ſmalleſt preſent?—But you obſerve ſilence
"—You bluſh—You are conſcious of your
"guilt—You look towards them—You beg
"forgiveneſs—Here, in thy name, I aſk
"John Harre, our ſovereign, who preſides
"over this illuſtrious aſſembly, and theſe
"generous and invincible chiefs, to pardon
"thy imprudence. We love thee, Bigorne;
"but never, in future, abuſe our affection
"—Swear that thou wilt never commit
"the like faults—Such errors will for ever
"alienate from thee, without hopes of re-
"turn, the hearts of the inhabitants of Foule-
"pointe; and to preſerve them take an
"oath that our intereſts and yours ſhall be

" hereafter the ſame. Aſk, then, of your " chiefs here aſſembled, why, ſince the ar- " rival of the laſt ſeven ſhips, the captains " have ſtill neglected to make the uſual pre- " ſents, which ſerve to promote a good " underſtanding in thoſe exchanges which " the whites wiſh to make with the Malega- " ches? Why have not theſe veſſels brought " effects to pay the debts contracted above " a year ago by the French?

" We have ſold them, on credit, accord- " ing to the rules of fair dealing, proviſions " of every kind, without any other ſecurity " than ſmall bits of paper, which contained, " as you aſſured us, a promiſe of being paid " in three moons. Why has this ſolemn pro- " miſe remained till the preſent day undiſ- " charged? This certainly is compelling us " to give up all commerce with the whites, or " at leaſt to entirely withdraw that confidence " which we had in their words and oaths."

" A large

"A large veſſel which touched here laſt "year was in the moſt urgent want of pro- "viſions, without having effects neceſſary to "purchaſe them. The merchants of Foule- "pointe, however, ſupplied the crew with "oxen and rice, and at the ſame price at "which they could have bought them for "ready money.

"They promiſed to ſend us payment by "the firſt veſſel which ſhould come from "the Iſle of France. Since that period "twelve have arrived; but they all refuſed "to pay this juſt debt.

"Will you now ſay, Bigorne, that the "people of Foulepointe have behaved diſ- "honeſtly to the French?

"Will you ſay, alſo, that, in giving a "trade-muſket in exchange for an ox, you "pay too dear?

"Will you ſay that two yards of blue "cloth is the juſt value of a meaſure of rice,

" weighing fifty pounds? You either think " us very ignorant of the price of proviſions " at the Iſle of France, or you have formed " the mad project of giving laws to us in- " ſtead of receiving them.

" Is it not true," continued the orator, addreſſing himſelf to the aſſembly, " that " you wiſh to deal with theſe ſtrangers " hereafter on juſter and more equitable " terms?"

The aſſembly teſtified by a general and tumultuous acclamation that this was their deſire.

Bigorne then wiſhed to elevate his voice; but the orator commanded him to be ſilent; and reſumed his diſcourſe by the order of John Harre and the other chiefs.

" The following," ſaid he, " are the con- " ditions preſcribed by the merchants of " Foulepointe: The meaſure of rice ſhall " be diminiſhed, when, in meaſuring it, the

" whites

" whites endeavour to heap up the rice, by " knocking on the bottom of the meaſure, " in order to increaſe its contents: they " will not ſuffer the meaſure to be heaped " as heretofore.

This obſervation made the aſſembly ſmile.

" An ox ſhall no longer be given in " exchange for a paltry trade-fuſee: a good " ſoldier's muſket ſhall be the price of an " ox.

" A piece of blue cloth ſhall contain two " yards, according to the ancient meaſure.

" The bambou of powder ſhall be increaſ- " ed in ſuch a manner, that three bambous " ſhall contain an hundred charges for a " muſket.

" The people of Foulepointe, who ſerve " the whites in quality of *ſcullions*, or do- " meſtics, ſhall receive a trade-fuſee as " wages for thirty days ſervice."

After this, the orator addreſſing the chiefs

and the aſſembly, ſaid, "Are not theſe your "lateſt wiſhes?"—The cry of "Yes" then reſounded from all quarters, intermixed with ſhouts of praiſe and approbation.

When this noiſe had ſubſided, the orator cried out with a voice like thunder, "You "hear, Bigorne, the wiſh of the *Palabre*; "it is the law of the chiefs, it is the deſire "of the people who trade with the whites. "Explain fully to your maſters what I have "juſt now propoſed. If they accept theſe "conditions, we ſhall confirm the treaty "by a ſolemn ſacrifice. If they will not "accept it, they may depart. We have no "proviſions to give them."

Bigorne tranſlated word for word to M. Poivre the ſpeech which I have here related; and the latter was obliged to interpoſe his authority, in order to prevent him from reproaching the orator for his vehemence. Bigorne was not accuſtomed to be treated with

with ſo little ceremony by theſe people: and this leſſon ſeemed to hurt him the more, as it was given before officers honoured with the confidence of the Eaſt-India Company.

M. Poivre, on the contrary, beheld the energy of theſe ſavages with pleaſure. He was ſtruck with the force and ſolidity of their reaſoning; but, being intruſted with the intereſts of the company, it was not in his power to make any alteration in the uſual price of proviſions. He ordered Bigorne to communicate this to the aſſembly; and to aſſure them, at the ſame time, that the merchants of Foulepointe would be immediately and generouſly paid for all the commodities with which they had ſupplied the French. He likewiſe granted an augmentation of ſalary to thoſe domeſtics who were in the ſervice of the whites; and accompanied all his promiſes with the moſt polite expreſſions, and ſuch as were likely

to awaken the ſenſibility of the chiefs. Whilſt he thus treated them as friends and brothers, he recommended peace and concord to them, in the ſtrongeſt terms; and gave them to underſtand, that the conduct of all thoſe whites, who ſhould not entertain the ſame ſentiments and reſpect for them, would be generally diſapproved. The ſpeech of M. Poivre, delivered in the Malegache language by Bigorne, ſeemed to make more impreſſion on the orator than on the aſſembly; and it was only in conſequence of the advice given by the former, that the treaty was agreed upon by a general acclamation.

The concluſion of this treaty was a matter of the utmoſt importance. The wants of the veſſels were urgent: for, as they contained ſix hundred men, three oxen a day, with a proportionable quantity of rice, were neceſſary to ſupply them with proviſions.

This treaty was ratified with the utmoſt ſolem-

ſolemnity. The orator ſlaughtered a victim; received the blood in an earthen veſſel; and mixed with it ſea-water, pimento, gun-flints broken, and bruiſed very fine, and a ſmall quantity of earth and gun-powder, moiſtened with *tafia*, or ſpirit made from the ſugar-cane. Two leaden bullets ſerved him to pound theſe different ingredients, in order to form a kind of beverage, which he wiſhed the devil might convert into poiſon for all thoſe who, having drunk of it, ſhould not adhere to their oath. He then took two lances, or aſſagays, and dipped the points of them in the liquor, while John Harre ſprinkled a few drops of it upon the ground.

The orator, afterwards, taking a knife in his right hand, and firſt invoking the god of the whites, and then that of the blacks, begged them with a loud voice to inſpire into the hearts of both peace, amity, concord, and ſincerity.

Then

Then ſtriking with his knife the points of the two aſſagays, which he had dipped into the liquor, he denounced the moſt horrid maledictions and imprecations againſt thoſe who ſhould infringe the treaty.

"If the whites," ſaid he, "break their "oath, may this beverage become poiſon "to them; may thoſe hurricanes which "ruſh with fury from the four quarters of "the heavens, fall upon their veſſels; may "they be ſwallowed up by the waves; and "may the bodies of theſe wicked men be "torn by the formidable monſters which "inhabit the abyſſes of the ſea.

"Hear, John Harre—liſten to the voice "of the powerful genius who inſpires me: "Should the people of Foulepointe be ſo "baſe and ſo worthleſs as to violate this "ſolemn treaty, may they periſh by the "ſword of the enemy; may their bellies

"burſt;

"burſt; and may their filthy carcaſes be-
"come food for the crocodiles.

"Muſt not the inviſible ſpirit who pre-
"ſides at this aſſembly be avenged? Muſt
"he not puniſh the perjured, ſince he re-
"ceives their oaths? All men, whether white
"or black, are before him; all are ſubjected
"to his ſupreme will; and he requires from
"us all, under the pain of incurring pu-
"niſhments equally terrible and ſevere, the
"ſame fidelity, and the ſame ſincerity."

Rabefin (this was the name of the orator) pronounced theſe horrid imprecations three times; and with ſo much vehemence in his ſpeech and geſtures, that they made an impreſſion upon the aſſembly, of which it would be impoſſible to convey an idea by words.

Whilſt the aſſembly were in this ſtate of fear and terror, John Harre and the other chiefs with a trembling hand put about a

ſpoonful of their diſguſting liquor into a leaf of *raven*, and ſwallowed it, with the moſt horrid grimaces. Their example was followed by the greater part of thoſe who aſſiſted at the ceremony: but ſome of the Frenchmen contented themſelves with only feigning to do it, notwithſtanding the preſſing invitation of Bigorne, who, without doubt, believed this ridiculous and diſagreeable farce neceſſary, if not to the ſucceſs, at leaſt to the ſolidity of the treaty.

Rabeſin then proceeded to ſacrifice the victims; and a grand feaſt, accompanied with dancing, muſic, and ſports, terminated, rather in a noiſy but joyful manner, this celebrated *palabre*. I have deſcribed the ceremonies practiſed at this aſſembly in preference to any of thoſe at which I aſſiſted, merely becauſe it related to affairs of the utmoſt importance; and by doing ſo I have, I think, attained the end which I ought to have had

in

in view, that of tracing out a ſlight ſketch of the character and extraordinary cuſtoms of theſe people.

This ſhort deſcription will be ſufficient to ſuch readers as wiſh rather for inſtruction, than to amuſe themſelves with all the childiſh conceits with which the moſt ſerious deliberations are often accompanied, not only in Madagaſcar, but in more civiliſed countries.

Rabefin had the talent of being able to change the features of his face at pleaſure: his words, which always correſponded with his geſtures, aſſumed the appearance of ſincerity; and he was no ſtranger to the art of moving minds the leaſt ſuſceptible of enthuſiaſm, and of enflaming the leaſt iraſcible.

Is it not ſurpriſing, that a ſavage ſhould poſſeſs, in ſo eminent a degree, this art of deception, which the orators of civiliſed nations

tions often abuſe in ſo dangerous a manner? How did Rabelin know that, in order to miſlead mankind, it is always better to addreſs the paſſions than to ſpeak to the judgment? How had he learned to take advantage of that ſecret propenſity which makes us ſo fond of fraud and deluſion? What influence over the multitude have not thoſe perfidious declaimers, or cunning impoſtors, who, either with a view to intereſt, or of diſtinguiſhing themſelves in the world, endeavour to varniſh over with brilliant, but falſe, colours the moſt fatal errors? Falſehood, ſuſceptible by its nature of an infinite variety of combinations, may be diſguiſed under a thouſand forms; but truth is not attended with this dangerous advantage; it has only one appearance; and to endeavour to embelliſh it is to degrade it, and deſtroy its force. Cato wiſhed that all thoſe ſophiſts and rhetoricians, who were ſo celebrated

lebrated at Rome in his time, might be driven from the city. I am much of the ſame opinion as that great man. Reaſon has no enemies more formidable. Effervescence and enthuſiaſm are always attended with danger, even when they are directed towards views of utility: but if they are directed to hurtful objects, the evils which they produce cannot be expreſſed. This ſentence, however, can relate only to thoſe who, endeavouring to impoſe on the multitude, diſdain no means of deception which are likely to accompliſh that end. The decree would be too ſevere did it not reſpect true eloquence; that is to ſay, that ſublime talent which carries perſuaſion and conviction, at the ſame time, into the hearts of enlightened men. Real eloquence is the delight of good minds, and one of the moſt powerful promoters of happineſs. Clearneſs, preciſion, and elegance are its principal attributes.

tributes. A man truly eloquent never borrows foreign aſſiſtance; he knows that every thing which is not deeply and ſenſibly felt, has not been ſtrongly expreſſed. He diſdains and rejects thoſe brilliant ornaments, and artificial appendages, which ſerve only to give error, if not weight, at leaſt the appearance, and ſometimes the ſplendour of truth.

Rabefin was held in great reputation; but his morals did not correſpond with his abilities. Corrupted from infancy, by his intercourſe with the Europeans, he was accounted one of the moſt dangerous and deceitful of villains. Bigorne, who knew better than any one his vices and his influence over the inhabitants of Foulepointe, was obliged, not only to ſhew him in public every kind of deference and reſpect, but alſo to gain him over with the utmoſt ſecrecy by rich preſents. It was only by purſuing

ſuing this method that he could accompliſh his views; for any other would have made them miſcarry, and have even expoſed him. Men proof againſt corruption are very uncommon. Civiliſed nations, do not flatter yourſelves: in this reſpect you have no advantage over ſavages.

The greater part of your orators imitate with more art, but perhaps with fewer external appearances of deceit, this Rabefin, who cunningly ſold, for his own benefit, thoſe intereſts of which he was believed to be a moſt zealous defender. Would not one have ſuppoſed him to be abſolutely averſe to the treaty of commerce, which the agents of the Eaſt-India Company wiſhed to form with the merchants of Foulepointe? And after the ſudden and unexpected concluſion of this treaty, could any but John Harre, and the other chiefs, be reaſonably accuſed of having promoted it, becauſe a very rich

preſent was publicly given to them? Bigorne, however, who was highly irritated at Rabeſin's ſpeech, did not ſuffer M. Poivre to be ignorant, that all his efforts would have been of no avail, had not this orator, won over by preſents before the *palabre*, formally acceded to every thing aſked, without the participation of John Harre and the other chiefs. This fact is highly deſerving of remark, as it took place among ſavages, where ſincerity, and ſtill more the dread of breaking a ſolemn oath, obliges every individual to adhere to whatever has been agreed upon, under the ſevereſt penalties.

The morning after the concluſion of the treaty, the market at Foulepointe was ſtored with every thing in abundance. The veſſels, therefore, made haſte to take in their quantity of proviſions; which they did ſoon, and at a very ſmall expence.

When

When M. Poivre arrived in France, he gave a favourable account of La Bigorne's conduct to the East-India Company. La Bigorne was then only interpreter at Foulepointe; but, on the recommendation of M. Poivre, he received a commiſſion to manage, in the whole iſland of Madagaſcar, under the orders of the adminiſtration of the Iſle of France, all affairs relating to trade and the victualling of ſhips. The Company had every reaſon to be ſatisfied with their choice; for La Bigorne conducted himſelf with equal prudence and ability, till the year 1762, when he was recalled to the Iſle of France becauſe he had made war on John Harre. We are aſſured that he exerted his utmoſt endeavours to preſerve peace at Foulepointe; but that he was, at length, obliged openly to ſupport ſeveral chiefs, allies of the French, who had cauſe to complain of the violence and depredations of John

Harre, whoſe propenſity to vice and debauchery increaſed every day.

The chiefs, who were enemies to John Harre, united together, in order to prevail on Bigorne to take the command of their armies. This brave ſoldier did not, however, yield to their entreaties, but on conditions which muſt have appeared very ſtrange to the ſavages. He openly declared, that if he aſſumed the command of their troops, he would take the prudent precaution not to expoſe himſelf to the enemies fire; becauſe his death would infallibly occaſion the deſtruction of thoſe warriors who fought under his ſtandards. A general, who, following only the impulſe of his courage, ſuffers himſelf to be carried into the thickeſt of the battle, is no longer able to diſpoſe his forces in the moſt advantageous manner; the army is then abſolutely without a chief; the combatants are conſequently

quently thrown into diſorder; and chance only decides the victory.

I do not know whether the Medecaſſes were ſtruck with La Bigorne's reaſons. People without diſcipline, and who have no idea of the advantages which always reſult from good order and perfect harmony, muſt have believed that General Bigorne had more abilities than courage. However, after ſhewing ſome marks of aſtoniſhment and ſurpriſe, they ranged themſelves under his banners. La Bigorne then made them go through ſome very ſimple manœuvres; and finding them ſubmiſſive, and reſolved to execute his orders punctually, he led them towards the enemy. When the two armies were in ſight of each other, he renewed his prohibition of beginning the combat until he had given the ſignal.

The army of John Harre was more numerous and much ſtronger than that of

La Bigorne; but the poſition of the latter ſeemed to promiſe him the moſt complete victory, ſhould John Harre venture to attack him. John Harre, not having ſufficient abilities to judge of his diſadvantageous ſituation, charged the enemy with vigour; but he was repulſed in ſo terrible a manner that he was obliged to ſeek ſafety by flight. This chief, therefore, who had hitherto been accounted invincible, was overcome merely by the ſkilful diſpoſition of a man, who did not appear in the engagement, and who was even at ſome diſtance from the field of battle.

John Harre, having afterwards learned that La Bigorne directed the movements of the army which had defeated him, obſerved, "How could I defend myſelf againſt the "inviſible ſpirit of a white man who at-"tacked me? But, in order to be revenged, "I will quit Foulepointe, and retire to the

"bay

" bay of Antongil. My removal from that " port will alarm the merchants of Foule- " pointe; the markets will no longer be ſup- " plied; commerce will, in the mean time, " ſuffer; and La Bigorne's chiefs will recal " him to the Iſle of France. My departure " from Foulepointe, therefore, ſeems to " promiſe me a ſpeedy deliverance from my " moſt formidable enemy."

What John Hare had predicted ſoon afterwards took place. His defeat had occaſioned great ſorrow at Foulepointe; and his departure put an entire ſtop to commerce. Some of the chiefs, friends to Bigorne, made vain efforts to bring proviſions to the markets; for the merchants at Foulepointe oppoſed them as much as they could. The French veſſels, which had come to that port for refreſhments, after endeavouring, without effect, to reſtore peace and concord among theſe people, were obliged

to repair to the Iſle of France, in a very deplorable ſtate, and in the utmoſt want of the moſt common neceſſaries. On their united complaints La Bigorne was recalled and diſgraced: yet we are aſſured that he was not guilty; and that few men in his place would have ſuffered ſo long the oppreſſive and inſolent behaviour of John Harre. I ſhould be glad that I could believe this to be the caſe: but his conduct will always appear reprehenſible to thoſe who think they have no right to preſcribe rules, and to give laws in a foreign country.

However this may be, La Bigorne's departure brought back John Harre to Foulepointe. On his arrival he met with a much better reception than he had any reaſon to expect; and commerce ſoon began to reſume its wonted activity: but matters did not long remain in this tranquil ſituation. The

flames

flames of diſcord were not yet extinguiſhed; hatred and animoſity ſtill continued to foment them; but, at length, after a tedious war, the iſland of Madagaſcar was delivered from this turbulent and formidable tyrant, who could live in peace neither with his allies nor his ſubjects. He was killed in 1767 by the Manivouleſe; and his ſpoils ſerved to enrich the enemy, and to augment their power.

His ſon *Ravi* inherited only a ſmall part of his father's poſſeſſions, as he was too young not to be ſatisfied with what was given him. Of the reign of this prince I ſhall ſay nothing, though I had an opportunity of being particularly acquainted with him; for, as he had neither ſpirit nor abilities, he never performed any action of ſufficient importance to merit a place here.

At the time when John Harre died, the iſles of France and Bourbon were not under the

the direction of the East-India Company. The king had resumed the management of them, and had appointed M. Poivre to be intendant of that colony. Bigorne then no longer found any obstacle to prevent his returning to Foulepointe, where his presence, on account of certain circumstances, was become highly necessary. On his arrival he received from the inhabitants the most flattering testimonies of friendship and esteem. The strong idea which the islanders had before entertained of his talents and integrity caused him to be chosen arbiter of all their differences. He re-established peace in the northern part of Madagascar; and M. Poivre had nothing to bestow upon him but praises for his good conduct. I was particularly acquainted with him, when I visited Madagascar in 1768, and I can fully certify that he deserved them. M. Poivre, who honoured me with his friend-

ship

ſhip and confidence, being deſirous of procuring for his celebrated garden at *Montplaiſir*, known at preſent by the name of *the King's Botanical Garden in the Iſle of France*, the rareſt and moſt uſeful plants of that iſland, caſt his eyes upon me as a perſon proper for making that valuable collection. He, indeed, could not have given a richer preſent to the colony entruſted to his care. This able adminiſtrator never ſuffered a veſſel to depart without requeſting the captain, or ſome intelligent officer, to bring him the various productions of the countries which they were going to viſit; and this demand was always accompanied with proper inſtructions. The garden of *Montplaiſir* thus became, in his hands, one of the richeſt nurſeries known, ſince it contains the moſt valuable plants of the four quarters of the world.

On my arrival at Foulepointe I did not find

find La Bigorne; and this diſappointment gave me the more uneaſineſs, as he was particularly enjoined to afford me every aſſiſtance in his power to accompliſh the object of my miſſion. However, after examining the whole environs of Foulepointe, I ſet out to join him at Mananharre, a village ſituated at the entrance of the bay of Antongil. In my way thither I traverſed the iſland of St. Mary, where I remained as long as was neceſſary for ſtudying its different productions; and I did not reach Mananharre till the eighth day after my departure from Foulepointe.

La Bigorne received me with every mark of attention, and gave me a variety of information, of which I have been here able to inſert only a few ſhort extracts. With him I viſited the moſt intereſting places in the neighbourhood of the great bay of Antongil, and with him I ſaw thoſe aſtoniſhing

quar-

quarries of rock cryſtal, the maſſes of which are ſo enormous as almoſt to ſurpaſs belief. But let me not loſe ſight of my object, and proceed to give an account of the eſtabliſhments formed by the French in the northern part of Madagaſcar.

I ſhall terminate what appeared to me moſt remarkable on this ſubject by an account of that of Benyowſki. This large eſtabliſhment, which was formed under the adminiſtration of M. de Boynes, coſt an immenſe ſum of money; had no ſucceſs; and ended in a very tragical manner.

Benyowſki has been ſo much celebrated that it may not be here improper to give a ſhort account of his principal adventures: but that I may not venture to ſay any thing without good authority, I ſhall tranſcribe the memoir which he delivered to the gentlemen intruſted with the management of the Iſle of France. This memoir was diſ-

perſed

perſed ſo much throughout the colony, that it was eaſy for me to procure a copy of it. I have not made the leaſt correction in it; becauſe I thought it a matter of importance to exhibit in every point of view this audacious man, whoſe ſcandalous behaviour coſt millions to France, and brought new calamities on Madagaſcar.

LETTER OF BARON D'ALADAR, KNOWN AT PRESENT UNDER THE NAME OF BENYOWSKI, TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE ISLE OF FRANCE.

"IT is with the utmoſt pleaſure and "eagerneſs, inſpired by my zeal and the "deſire I have of ſerving you, that I proceed "to ſatisfy you reſpecting what you require "of me.

"Born a Hungarian, of the illuſtrious "family

" family of the barons de Benyowſki, I " ſerved in quality of general in the armies " of the empreſs our ſovereign. My father " was of the houſe of Aladar XIII. and my " mother of that of the counts de Rerary: " I am conſequently a Pole by extraction.

" In 1765, the king of Poland, elector of " Saxony, being dead, and his kingdom in- " vaded, I went to Warſaw, to ſupport " the intereſts of a prince, in the midſt of " trouble, and of the ſubverſion of celebrated " ſtatutes, and of the firſt members of the " ſtate. The grandees of the kingdom had " been arreſted by a ſecret order; and as I " was of the party of the prince biſhop " of Cracaw, and other magnates, a re- " queſt was made that I might be arreſted " by prince Repnin, the Ruſſian miniſter. " Informed of this deſign, and not knowing " what to do, I repaired, as ſpeedily as I " could, to a friend of prince Radziwil,

" whoſe protection I ſolicited. Here I ſtaid
" till the general confederation of Bar was
" declared, to which being invited by mar-
" ſhal Pulawſky, I immediately entered into
" that of Cracaw, under the command of
" marſhal de Czarnowſky. Being admitted
" as an officer into the regiment of Caſtres,
" I was made a priſoner by the Muſcovites,
" who had taken Cracaw. I, however, ran-
" ſomed myſelf for the ſum of two thouſand
" ducats, and afterwards entered into the
" confederation of Bar, where having ob-
" tained the rank of colonel and general, I
" ſerved againſt the Muſcovites, under the
" command of Fortality-Svaniecz, and com-
" bated the enemy, as is proved in the acts
" of the confederation. The enemy being
" expelled, I received orders to go to
" Turkey with M. Pulawſky. The bacha
" of Natolia and Chotyn received me with
" friendſhip, and gave me aſſiſtance of troops

" and money, with which immediately en-
" tering the kingdom of Poland, I ſuſtain-
" ed a combat againſt the Ruſſians, near
" Pruth, where I was wounded and taken.
" I was then carried to Riovia, where I
" found marſhal Czarnoſky, count Potoſky,
" and young Pularſky, with three thou-
" ſand men.

" Being afterwards removed to Cazan, I
" paſſed Nezin and Tuta; and, by means
" of a German ſurgeon, I tranſmitted to his
" eminence the prince biſhop of Cracaw,
" who was at Kaluga, a letter, in which I
" informed him of my misfortune. The
" governor of Cazan, M. Guaſnin Sama-
" rini, ſuffered me, like the reſt of the pri-
" ſoners, to enjoy my liberty in the city.

" On the 15th of Auguſt, 1769, I was
" viſited by a Ruſſian officer, who privately
" gave me letters from the captive princes,
" with orders to carry them to Kaluga. After

" conferring with the principals, and taking " their advice on this ſubject, I eſcaped to " Cazan, by pretending to the governor that " I had an ardent deſire to viſit the copper " mines, and arrived without any accident " at Kaluga, aſſiſted by colonel Bacheme- " triew, the governor of Fortality, who was " of the party of the priſoners.

" I had been appointed to treat perſon- " ally with the princes and magnates; and " it was agreed, that, confining myſelf to " a few expeditions, I ſhould ſet out for " Peterſburgh. I even repaired, without de- " lay, to Quorſum, and taking up my quar- " ters in the houſe of colonel Soacſek, I " finiſhed the expedition according to my " engagement. When on the point of re- " turning to Caſan, I was arreſted by orders " of the empreſs of Ruſſia; and as nothing " certain was known reſpecting my private " flight, I was ſent priſoner to Kaluga, to

" which

" which I had been diſpatched by the " princes.

" Having formed a friendſhip with the " governor, we entered into a treaty, by " which, with the aſſiſtance of Tuga, we " engaged to retire into Poland; and the " governor had diſpoſed every thing to fa- " cilitate our eſcape, when, on the 18th of " October 1769, an officer of the guards " arrived from Peterſburgh with orders to " arreſt the governor; but the governor " prevented him by putting him to death; " and, ſeeking ſafety by flight, left us all pri- " ſoners. That very day we were loaded " with chains, and conducted to Peterſ- " burgh, where it was impoſſible for me to " hear any farther news of my companions " in adverſity.

" I was ſhut up in the private priſon of " Fortality; and, on the fourth day after " being obliged to appear before Orlow and

" Czernichew, I was interrogated reſpecting
" ſeveral points. As they could draw no-
" thing from my anſwers, even by threats,
" they promiſed me a pardon, in the name
" of the empreſs, if I would ſwear fidelity
" to her majeſty, and diſcover thoſe ſecrets
" with which I had been entruſted. On my
" refuſing to comply with theſe terms, I
" was remanded to priſon, from which, by
" means of an officer, I wrote to prince
" Lobkowitz, her majeſty's lieutenant; but
" I received no anſwer. Some days after,
" having appeared before the commiſſion,
" I was compelled to ſign the following
" paper:

" *I, the underſigned, acknowledge that I not*
" *only wiſhed to break my chains, but that I*
" *committed an aſſaſſination, and have been*
" *guilty of treaſon againſt her Imperial majeſ-*
" *ty; and if her majeſty, through her natu-*

" *ral*

" *ral goodneſs, ſhall be pleaſed to ſoften the ri-*
" *gour of my ſentence, I hereby engage, after*
" *recovering my liberty, never to ſet a foot*
" *again in the dominions of her majeſty, much*
" *leſs to bear arms againſt her.*

" Peterſburgh, Nov. 22d, 1769,

" Baron Maurice Auguſtus Aladar de
" Benyowſki,
" General of the firſt confederation."

" After ſigning this paper, I was ſent
" back to confinement; and on the 24th of
" November, at midnight, an officer ap-
" peared, at the head of twenty-eight men,
" who having put irons on my legs, hurried
" me into a carriage, and proceeded towards
" Moſcow. I had as my companion in miſ-
" fortune major Vynblat; and, deprived of
" all nouriſhment, except bread and water,
" we paſſed through Nizney, Kuzmodem,
" Janſkoy, and Solichanſzky, where the of-

" ficer, who was entruſted with the care of " conducting us, fell ill, which obliged us " to remain there ſome days.

" On the 28th of December the ſame " year, one of the ſoldiers came and told " me, that a body of guards, who were " conducting ſome priſoners, had ſtopped at " a place not far diſtant. As they were in " our neighbourhood, they wiſhed very " much to ſee people who were unfortunate " like themſelves; and prevailed on their " officer to conduct them to us in the night- " time. When they arrived, I immediately " perceived his ſerene highneſs the prince " biſhop of Cracaw, whoſe tears prevented " him from ſpeaking; but we were not " long permitted to ſee each other. Having " ſeparated, we purſued our journey, in " company, but in different carriages, as far " as Tobolſk, the capital of Siberia. After " a very ſhort ſtay there, we croſſed the de-

" ſarts

" ſarts of Tartary drawn by dogs, without
" hearing any thing of the reſt. We ſuffered
" much from hunger; and, after traverſ-
" ing Siberia, we found ſome exiled officers
" of different nations.

" At length, on the 20th of May, 1770,
" we reached the port of Ochozk, where we
" were kindly received by Pleniſtere, the
" governor. Soon after, two Ruſſian officers
" arrived, who ſaid they belonged to the
" guards of their highneſſes the princes de-
" tained at Kaluga, and with whom I formed
" an intimate friendſhip.

" On the 3d of September the ſame
" year, we were put on board a ſhip, and
" conveyed to the port of Bolſao. On the
" 24th of December I received a letter from
" the biſhop of Cracaw, by a merchant,
" who tranſmitted it to me. It informed
" me that the princes were removed to the
" northern part of Tartary, towards Ana-

" dyo; and that a troop of Ruſſian ſoldiers " were preparing to revolt, in order to re- " leaſe them. I immediately wrote to ma- " jor Vynblat, to inform him what he " ſhould do to procure us our liberty alſo. " For my part, I rendered myſelf the friend " of the officer Gureſinim, who never quit- " ted me; and he not only facilitated the " means of my eſcaping, but even opened " his purſe to me.

" Our affairs were in this ſituation when " we were joined by two exiled Ruſſian " officers, who told me, that near us there " was a priſoner cloſely guarded, who was " ſuppoſed to be a perſon of great diſtinction, " and who had been kept in irons ſeven " years. No perſon could give us any ſa- " tisfactory account of him: we were only " told that he was ten or eleven years of " age, and that he was entruſted to the " care of an old officer, who wiſhed very

" much

" much for his deliverance. I conceived " then a project of gaining the friendſhip " of this officer, who willingly liſtened to " my propoſals. He revealed to me the " name of the priſoner; who was, indeed, " of an illuſtrious birth; and we concerted " together a plan for his eſcape, taking each " of us an oath that we would exert our- " ſelves to the utmoſt to make it ſucceed.

" It was on the 25th of May, that, with " the aſſiſtance of God, we intended to pro- " cure our liberty at the price of our blood. " As I was the only perſon who underſtood " how to work a ſhip, I was appointed the " chief of the enterpriſe. The conſpiracy, " however, being diſcovered on the 21ſt of " April, the governor ordered me to be car- " ried away in the night, for the ſecond " time, with an intention of conveying me " to ſome other place. My brethren in diſ- " treſs, frightened at this blow, came to me

" on

" on the 26th, and begged me to relieve
" them. The affair was eaſy. The lieute-
" nant, who was on guard over me, having
" cauſed arms to be carried privately to his
" habitation, ſupplied me and all my com-
" panions, at the head of whom I took poſ-
" ſeſſion of the fort on the night of the 27th.
" In this action the governor and ſome others
" were killed in the commencement of the
" attack, while a few of my people only were
" ſlightly wounded.

" Next morning, the ſoldiers and Coſ-
" ſacks wiſhed to enter ſword in hand into
" the town of Bolſao, the inhabitants of
" which, terrified, after the ſecond and third
" diſcharge of our muſquetry, ſurrendered
" on the 29th of April. I entered trium-
" phantly into the town of Kamſchatka,
" and no one appeared to oppoſe me. I
" immediately ſent people to ſeize the veſ-
" ſels which were in the harbour; and went

" myſelf

" myſelf with ſome others to Zamicka,
" where I arreſted the ſecretary of the ſe-
" nate, who had arrived from Peterſburgh,
" and obliged him to deliver up all the let-
" ters of the chancery. After taking every
" thing that belonged to me and two hun-
" dred inhabitants of Kamſchatka, I went
" down to the harbour, where I ſeized on
" three ſhips, choſe for myſelf the ſtrong-
" eſt, and left the reſt diſmaſted.

" Having freed this veſſel, which was
" called the St. Peter, from the ice, I em-
" barked with every thing neceſſary, and
" ſet ſail on the 12th of May, 1771. I had
" ſixty-ſeven perſons with me on board, viz.
" eight officers, eight married women, and a
" young woman known by the title of the
" Princeſs; the reſt conſiſted of the crew.
" In this manner I departed from Kam-
" ſchatka, and paſſing the latitude of 52°

" 52',

" 52′, entered the channel of the Kurile " iſles, commonly called *Jedſo*.

" Purſuing my courſe towards the north- " eaſt, I landed on the iſland of Bernighia- " na, ſituated to the eaſt, under the fifty- " fifth degree of latitude, and the ninth me- " ridian from the port which I had left. " Here I found M. Ochotyn, with eighty " men. This Poliſh officer, according to " what he related, had ſaved himſelf in the " ſame manner as I, and had eſtabliſhed " himſelf with his crew in thoſe American " iſlands called *Alentis*. He had formed an " alliance with the inhabitants of the coun- " try; and his people had contracted mar- " riages amongſt them. In this iſland I " left three of my men; and he gave me " letters to ſhew wherever I might judge it " neceſſary to do ſo.

" On the 26th of May, ſteering away a

" conſiderable

" conſiderable diſtance from that iſland, I " found the ſea covered with ice, which " obliged me on the 2d of June to land at " the iſland of Aladar, ſituated under the " ſixty-firſt degree of latitude, and the twen- " ty-ſecond meridian from Kamſchatka. On " the 9th of June I again put to ſea, and " directing my route towards the ſouth-eaſt, " fell in, according to my reckoning, with " the point of the American continent, un- " der the ſixtieth degree of latitude, and " the twenty-ſixth meridian from Kam- " ſchatka. Sailing then towards the fifty- " firſt degree of latitude, on account of the " violence of the wind, I afterwards chang- " ed my courſe towards the ſouth-weſt; " and on the 20th of June arrived at an " iſland known to the Ruſſians by the name " of *Urum-Sir*, or the iſland of *Xti*, ſituated " under the latitude of 53° 45', and diſtant " 15° 58' of longitude from Kamſchatka.

" Here

"Here I formed a friendſhip with the Ame-
"ricans, which induced me to remain ſome
"days amongſt them; but on the 27th of
"June I ſet ſail, ſteering ſouth-weſt, and
"kept at ſea till the 30th, when I diſcover-
"ed, in the latitude of 46° 6′, and ten de-
"grees of longitude from Kamſchatka, a land
"inhabited likewiſe by Ruſſians; but I
"could not go on ſhore on account of con-
"trary winds, which, notwithſtanding all
"my efforts, carried me to a great diſtance
"from it. Having, therefore, formed a
"deſign of reſuming my ancient route, af-
"ter ſuffering a long time from the incon-
"ſtancy of the winds, and finding that our
"water was exhauſted, ſo that we were
"obliged to drink ſea-water, rendered pota-
"ble with flour and whale oil, I landed, on
"the 15th of July, on an iſland, which lies
"in the latitude of 32° 45′, and in longitude
"334° 45′ from Kamſchatka. This iſland

"was

"was inhabited, and the beauty of its situ-
"ation, added to other attractions, induced
"me to give it the name of *Liquoris*. I quit-
"ted it on the 22d, and directing my courſe
"weſtward, arrived, on the 28th, at *Kilin-*
"*gur*, a Japaneſe port, ſituated in latitude
"34° and longitude 343° from Kamſchatka.
"This port is cloſe to a town and citadel,
"where we were kindly received by the
"inhabitants, who gave us a ſupply of pro-
"viſions.

"On the 1ſt of Auguſt I quitted this
"port, and on the 3d landed at *Meuco*,
"where I was inſulted by the Japaneſe,
"whom I found very untractable. Deſir-
"ous of proceeding thence to the Philip-
"pines, I continued my route towards the
"ſouth, and, coaſting along ſome other
"iſlands for ſeveral days, landed in the iſle
"of *Uſiona*, in latitude 27° 28′, and longi-
"tude 335°.

"Being perfectly well received by the "people of this island, I spent some days "amongst them: they supplied me with "abundance of provisions; and after a mu- "tual treaty I sailed for the island of *For-* "*mosa*. Having entered a port in latitude "23° 15', and longitude 223°, I found "myself attacked by the inhabitants, who "killed three of my men. After avenging "their death, the winds always contrary "obliged me to make for the continent of "China, coasting along some small islands "known under the name of *Piscatoria*; "and want of water compelled me to enter "by open force into *Tanasoa*, and to attack "the Chinese, who endeavoured to prevent "me from procuring a supply. I then "sailed for *Macao*, a city belonging to her "most faithful majesty, where I arrived on "the 22d of September, 1771.

"In this place I was received with every

"mark

"mark of friendſhip, by the Sieur Salema
"de Saldanha, the governor, and obtained
"permiſſion for me and my crew to land;
"but we left our arms in the ſhip, in order
"that we might excite no ſuſpicion. Here
"I learned that there was a league of friend-
"ſhip between our auguſt ſovereigns; and
"being deſirous of keeping a ſecret, in
"which they were intereſted, I aſked per-
"miſſion to hoiſt the flag of his moſt Chriſ-
"tian Majeſty, which I obtained.

"What can I ſay more to your excellency,
"that your own people are not able to in-
"form you of? Having tranſported my
"baggage to the houſe of M. de Robien,
"the preſident of the council, now in China,
"I embarked, on the 17th of January, with
"my crew, in two trading veſſels, and ar-
"rived ſafe and ſound in the Iſle of France,
"where I have drawn up the preſent rela-
"tion. I beg, therefore, that you would be

"pleaſed to order me a ſpeedy paſſage to "Europe.

"I ſhall every where acknowledge this "favour received from your friendſhip, and "ſhall be eternally devoted to your ſer-"vice.

"I am your Excellency's

Iſle of France,
March 21, 1772. "moſt humble ſervant,

"Baron Maurice Auguſtus d'Aladar de "Benyowſki,

"General of the firſt confederation."

ONE cannot help feeling ſome emotions of ſurpriſe on ſeeing that Benyowſki has omitted every thing that might have tended to direct navigators in the route from Kamſchatka to China, by the way of Japan. Nothing is neceſſary but the elements of the nautical ſcience to enable one to remark ſoundings and anchorage; to point out the

ſtrength

ſtrength and direction of the winds; to determine the variations of the needle; to fix the ſituation of the principal caps and quick-ſands; and, in ſhort, to give, if not the longitude, at leaſt the latitude of the moſt remarkable places.

The journal of the pilot, entruſted with the care of the veſſel, ought certainly to have informed him reſpecting all theſe particulars.

A traveller of abilities, or only animated with a deſire of rendering himſelf uſeful, when he viſited diſtant countries, and traverſed paſſages little frequented by European ſhips, would not have neglected details indiſpenſably neceſſary to the ſafety and improvement of navigation. Benyowſki, however, boaſted of the extent of his knowledge, and of having diſcovered a new route for going from Kamſchatka to China: but the journal of his voyage, while it proves

that he was ignorant even of the moſt common and technical terms uſed in navigation, leaves no document, or certain traces of the courſe which he ſays he purſued.

This accuſation is not made without ſufficient reaſon. I appeal for the juſtneſs of it, to all thoſe who, like me, ſaw him arrive from Canton at the Iſle of France. They will all certify, that, with a view to render the account of his adventures more romantic, he publicly declared, that in a ſmall veſſel badly equipped, and almoſt deſtitute of proviſions, or rather having nothing to ſubſiſt on but dried fiſh, he quitted, on his departure from Kamſchatka, the Aſiatic coaſt in order to go to America. Over and above, this intrepid adventurer was not afraid to affirm before experienced ſeamen, that he went on ſhore on ſome unknown land, ſituated to the north of California. This ſtrange aſſertion gives riſe to a multitude of objections.

objections. The diſtreſſed ſituation of his veſſel rendered his narration very improbable: beſides, the ſhort journal which he had the imprudence to publiſh, made no mention of that land ſituated to the north of California, and much leſs of its productions. On the laſt article, above all, Benyowſki appeared to be exceedingly embarraſſed; and he could find no means of delivering himſelf from importunate queſtions, but by ſaying that he reſerved for his court alone, the honour of being made acquainted with the particulars of his important diſcoveries.

This evaſion was not attended with ſucceſs. A general map of the world was preſented to him, and he was deſired to trace out the courſe of his voyage, after being aſſured that ſuch a ſlight ſketch could not expoſe him; but Benyowſki refuſed. M. Poivre, then intendant of the Iſle of France, was extremely glad that theſe efforts were

made in his preſence, to detect the impudent impoſture of this ſtranger. That enlightened adminiſtrator prudently avoided taking any part in them; but he made uſe of this cloſe attack to inſpire M. de Boynes with a juſt and ſalutary ſuſpicion of the pretended diſcoveries of Benyowſki. If, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, this information did not produce the intended effect, it would certainly be highly illiberal to throw out even the ſlighteſt reproaches againſt him, on that account. However, the relation given by Benyowſki, of his romantic adventures, was ſufficient to ruin, in the opinion of the public, this man, who was not aſhamed to produce before a generous people a ſcandalous declaration, in which he owned himſelf guilty of an execrable crime. This ſtranger, ſaid they, is not a madman; and yet he wiſhes to perſuade us that force and rigorous means were uſed to deprive

prive him of his innocence, and to cauſe him to ſign a deed which, while it diſgraces and debaſes him, renders him odious and ſuſpected. What expreſſion in our language is ſtrong enough to characteriſe the unparalleled impudence of this ſtranger, who thus allowed himſelf to ſpread an accuſation more degrading to himſelf than to his enemies?

Is there a country in the world where the open acknowledgment of an aſſaſſination is the means of recovering liberty? What could have been the end of this ſcandalous declaration?—Is it not impoſſible to diſcover the motive of it?

Whilſt I expreſs my ſentiments in this manner, I am only the faithful interpreter of that univerſal ſentiment of indignation with which the people of the Iſle of France were inſpired, when they read Benyowſki's improbable relation. It was an object of cenſure to every perſon of ſenſe; and if I

have tranſcribed it literally, it was merely becauſe I thought it proper that the moral character of this adventurer ſhould be known. I hope I ſhall be pardoned for ſo often beſtowing upon him that degrading appellation. Benyowſki is not condemned by his writings alone; there are ſtill greater charges againſt him.

Eſcaped from the priſons of Kamſchatka, Benyowſki proceeded to China with twenty or thirty priſoners. Scarcely had this ſtranger arrived at Canton, when he found among the French there ſome individuals, who were ſenſibly affected by his misfortunes; and he obtained from the factors and officers of the Eaſt-India Company conſiderable aſſiſtance for himſelf, as well as for the people whom he pretended to have under his command. They even did more for him: they engaged M. de St. Hylaire to take him on board his ſhip, and to convey him with

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all his ſuite to the Iſle of France. M. de St. Hylaire, having a rich cargo under his care belonging to private merchants, made at firſt ſome heſitation: he was afraid of admitting into his veſſel ſuch a number of ſtrangers who had broke from the priſons of Kamſchatka; but compaſſion got the better of every other ſenſation. When he had, however, proceeded to ſea, his uneaſineſs began to be revived with more ſtrength; and very juſtly, for theſe people had given him ſome cauſe to repent of his imprudent generoſity. Theſe adventurers, at the time when they embarked, had carefully concealed their arms. M. de St. Hylaire, therefore, when informed of this deception, was exceedingly ſorry to have men in his ſhip who were perhaps in a ſituation of giving laws to him inſtead of receiving them. Thirty or forty priſoners, armed in a formidable manner, were, certainly, ſufficient to alarm him reſpecting

the

the fate of his valuable cargo. In ſo delicate and difficult a ſituation what courſe could he purſue? Ought he to have made uſe of his authority to diſarm theſe ſtrangers? But his ſhip was weak, and badly equipped—ought he in ſuch a caſe to have riſked the property of his employers, and to have expoſed his life and his liberty againſt robuſt, reſolute, and enterpriſing men, who had every thing to gain and nothing to loſe? The ſlighteſt pretence might have given riſe to a quarrel, and produced an inſurrection which it was prudent to avoid. M. de St. Hylaire weighed all theſe matters in his mind, like a wiſe man; and, foreſeeing his danger, reſolved, after mature deliberation, to watch privately all the motions of his paſſengers. He even did more: he pretended to pay great honour, and to ſhew much deference and reſpect to Count Benyowſki. This adventurer then acted the man of importance;

exhauſted all the reſources of the moſt impudent impoſture to give himſelf a ſtill greater air of conſequence; and by the moſt ridiculous bravadoes impoſed even on his companions in misfortune. He openly declared himſelf to be their chief; his orders were punctually executed: he ever afterwards commanded as a maſter, and they behaved to him with the obſequiouſneſs of ſlaves. None but thoſe who were gentlemen durſt ſpeak to him. This is a certain fact. I was told it by M. de St. Hylaire and his officers.

The honours ſo prudently paid to Benyowſki, while they flattered his pride, preſerved tranquillity and good order in the ſhip. Subordination, ſo neceſſary for the ſafety of navigators, was not interrupted by this dangerous man; and, at length, after a ſhort and favourable paſſage, they arrived at the Iſle of France. Much praiſe is certainly due to the wiſe and cautious conduct

duct of M. de St. Hylaire; for it evidently appears that he extricated himself, with great ability, from a very difficult and dangerous situation.

Benyowski, surrounded by a numerous suite, repaired immediately on his landing to the governor of the colony. He no longer appeared as an unfortunate prisoner, but as the general of an army decorated with several insignia, and followed by an aid-de-camp, whose rich uniforms announced an officer of superior distinction. What an astonishing metamorphosis, or rather what a ridiculous farce! Had I not been an eye-witness of it, I should scarcely have ventured to relate it. When the real history of these adventurers was known at the Isle of France, the general and his brilliant attendants became a subject of laughter to every sensible man in the colony. Seamen are seldom enthusiasts. Such people require

quire coolneſs to ſubdue the elements, and knowledge to conduct, from one extremity of the earth to the other, thoſe large floating caſtles, which ſecure and protect the commerce of poliſhed nations. The lives of ſailors, and the ſafety of a ſhip or ſquadron, ought not to be entruſted to men too ſuſceptible of paſſion, or whoſe imaginations being lively and irregular are apt to be hurried into fits of delirium. Men of this kind, who are fond of, and admire, whatever is fabulous or romantic, are common only among idle and frivolous nations, or in large capitals, where their fatal influence occaſions ſtill greater diſorders than that of profligates. Such enthuſiaſtic characters are rare in the colonies, and are always deſtitute of credit and authority.

Benyowſki felt the truth of this aſſertion in all its bitterneſs. He ſaw, at the ſame time, of how much importance to him it

was

was to immediately quit a country where his adventures and travels excited no enthuſiaſm. The more he prolonged his ſtay the leſs reſpect was paid to him. On his departure for France he threw aſide the name of Baron d'Aladar, under which he had hitherto appeared, and aſſumed that of Count de Benyowſki: but what is highly worthy of remark is, that, at this epoch, he publicly announced that he was going to ſolicit in France the general government of the iſland of Madagaſcar.

This new gaſconade occaſioned much amuſement, and excited no alarm. One muſt have had a foreſight more than human to dread that a hope, in all appearance ſo chimerical, ſhould one day be realiſed. I can, therefore, ſafely aſſert, that words are not ſufficient to expreſs thoſe ſenſations of uneaſineſs and ſurpriſe which filled the minds of the whole colony, when they

learned

learned that Benyowſki had been appointed to the important ſtation of governor of Madagaſcar. I am entirely unacquainted with the ſeducing arts which this adventurer employed to accompliſh his ends: but M. Poivre, when he heard this intelligence, ſaid to me: "We have ſeen ſwarms of locuſts "devour, in an inſtant, abundant crops; we "have ſeen two terrible hurricanes threaten "the Iſle of France with entire deſtruction: "Madagaſcar ſerved to repair the evils "cauſed by theſe formidable ſcourges; but, "in future, the Iſle of France will have no "reſource. It muſt ſink under its misfor-"tunes, and periſh if afflicted with ſuch "diſaſters. Under Benyowſki's govern-"ment, Madagaſcar will not ſupply this "colony with proviſions: we can no longer "have in our diſtreſſes but diſtant and pre-"carious ſuccours. I have been much ac-"cuſtomed to ſee the ſucceſs of impoſtors

"and

" and adventurers: but that of Benyowſki " aſtoniſhes me; eſpecially after the letter " which I wrote reſpecting him to M. de " Boynes. I am well aware that every " thing eccentric pleaſes and amuſes the " multitude, and leads them into every " exceſs of credulity; but who could have " imagined, that a ſtranger, lately eſcaped " from the priſons of Kamſchatka, and " whoſe character was blaſted by his own " writings, would have obtained an impor- " ant ſituation without my conſent? Con- " nected cloſely by my office with the pro- " ſperity of the colony, I ought to have in- " ſpired him, when he firſt ſpoke to me of " Madagaſcar, with a deſire of dethroning " the Great Mogul. His requeſt, without " doubt, would have been granted; and we " ſhould have been delivered."

Benyowſki, however, was permitted to raiſe a company of volunteers; and he wiſhed

wiſhed that this troop might be dreſſed and armed in ſuch a manner as to ſpread fear and terror among the Malegaches; but by this he proved how little he was acquainted with the character of theſe people. He then choſe the Bay of Antongil for the place of his principal eſtabliſhment, though that part of the country is ravaged and deſolated by peſtilential fevers, from the month of October to the beginning of May. Navigators call that fatal ſeaſon the winter. No doubt can be entertained that the noxious vapours, which ariſe from the woods and marſhes, are the real cauſe of theſe epidemical diſeaſes. The inflammable air and putrid exhalations, which proceed in abundance from water in a ſtate of ſtagnation, and corrupted by the remains of vegetables, change the good quality of the atmoſpheric air, during calm weather or great heats. On ſuch occaſions the air is ſeldom renewed by

the ſea breezes; the north winds carry theſe exhalations along the coaſts; and drought and tranquillity render their effects more fatal. The Malegaches know, in a ſmall degree, how to preſerve themſelves by remaining in their huts, or houſes, amidſt a thick ſmoke; yet the ſobereſt and moſt robuſt of theſe iſlanders cannot always withſtand the malignancy of the diſorder. It is not ſurpriſing, therefore, that the Europeans, who are obliged to reſide on that coaſt, ſhould fall victims to diſtempers, which attack even thoſe who are ſeaſoned to the climate.

I was witneſs to the entire deſtruction of a ſmall French eſtabliſhment at Foulepointe, about the end of the year 1768. Though aſſiſtance of every kind was ſpeedily given to the unfortunate people who belonged to it, not one of them could be ſaved. The robuſt as well as the weak all fell victims

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to diſeaſe in the courſe of a very ſhort time. If I beheld this calamity without ſharing the fate of the reſt, it was becauſe the ſalubrious ſea air, with which our veſſel was ſurrounded, corrected, in ſome degree, the fatal effects of the putrid exhalations. Beſides, as ſoon as the firſt ſymptoms of the diſeaſe appeared in the village, all communication with the land, except what was indiſpenſably neceſſary, was rigorouſly forbidden. The crew were no longer allowed to have any intercourſe with the iſlanders; nor were their piroguas ſuffered to approach our veſſel. Without this precaution the infection might have been introduced into the ſhip; and no means could have been deviſed to check its progreſs. Thoſe who intend to frequent this dangerous coaſt ought not to deſpiſe theſe obſervations, the juſtneſs of which is confirmed by a multitude of examples. In a word, one

muſt either periſh or fly from that unwholeſome climate when the infection breaks out. No part in the northern quarter of Madagaſcar is free from putrid and malignant fevers; but theſe cruel diſeaſes do not every year occaſion the ſame ravages. Their violence and duration ſeem to depend more particularly on the direction of the wind. When it blows long from the north, the evil is at its height. There are few men robuſt and ſtrong enough to reſiſt the influence of this dangerous wind, which prevails only from the end of October till the beginning of May.

Benyowſki certainly could not have had very juſt notions, or accurate accounts, reſpecting the unhealthfulneſs of Madagaſcar. Yet it cannot be preſumed that the badneſs of its climate was entirely unknown to him, as he had reſided ſome time at the Iſle of France. It was obſerved even then that he had

formed

formed a deſign of ſoliciting the government of it; but this man, accuſtomed to brave every kind of danger, muſt not have thought ſuch an obſtacle capable of oppoſing the ſucceſs of a permanent eſtabliſhment.

However this may be, Benyowſki arrived at the Bay of Antongil, ſurrounded by a body of troops, ſufficient to overawe the iſlanders. His ſoldiers were furniſhed with enormous ſabres; they wore piſtols in their girdles; and it appeared as if their arms, their helmets, and their uniforms had been invented to ſpread fear and terror amongſt the natives of Madagaſcar. As ſoon as he had landed, he took formal poſſeſſion of the iſland, and made himſelf be proclaimed governor-general. He then traced out the plans of ſeveral fortreſſes, with a view of rendering himſelf formidable to the Madegaches, whom he wiſhed to conquer and

ſubdue. His projects, however, were neither founded on juſtice, nor directed by a local knowledge of the country. He made war upon the Malegaches; exerciſed every kind of cruelty againſt them; and was ſoon execrated as the tyrant of the country. The natives frightened fled into the interior parts of the iſland; all commerce was ſuſpended; and Benyowſki deſerted was known throughout all Madagaſcar by the name of the *wicked white man.*

It was, doubtleſs, very eaſy to foreſee that Benyowſki's eſtabliſhment would not be attended with ſucceſs: but ſuch a beginning would, certainly, appear ſurpriſing, were not the immorality and miſconduct of this adventurer well known. The reception Benyowſki met with in France, and his being veſted with unlimited power, muſt indeed aſtoniſh every perſon of ſenſe. We live in an enlightened age, and, on that ac-

count, it is more difficult to account for the French nation thus confiding in, and employing, a ſtranger whoſe actions were more than ſuſpicious. Several millions were thus ſacrificed to a falſe and imprudent ſpeculation, from which nothing could reſult but great evils to the Iſle of France, and ſtill greater to Madagaſcar.

A ſimple recital of facts conveys the moſt ſevere cenſure upon the imprudent confidence repoſed in this adventurer. M. Poivre certainly is free from all blame on that account; for he did every thing in his power to guard his country againſt the danger of being deluded by him.

But let us hear the account of an officer of diſtinction, who has every title to the higheſt celebrity. I am not allowed to mention his name; becauſe, being now abſent, I had not an opportunity of aſking his permiſſion. This officer accompanied

M. de Belcombe and M. Chevreau when they inſpected Benyowſki's eſtabliſhments at Madagaſcar.

"When I arrived," ſays he, "at Foule-"pointe, on the 17th of September 1776, "the population of the villages in the "neighbourhood of the fort had decreaſed "one half; bloody wars had deſolated the "whole country; the crops were entirely "deſtroyed; and agriculture was ſo much "neglected that we could hardly procure "three hundred pounds of rice. A ſcarcity "of other proviſions was equally felt. My "ſurpriſe, on this account, was very great; "for, when I was in the ſame ſpot three "years before, I obſerved commerce and "agriculture flouriſhing; the markets were "abundantly ſupplied; and ten large veſ-"ſels found a ſufficiency of rice to load "them, without any increaſe taking place "in the value of that neceſſary commodity.

" This large quantity of proviſion was ſolely
" deſtined for the Iſle of France, which three
" ſucceſſive hurricanes had reduced to a moſt
" alarming ſtate of diſtreſs. All the crops were
" loſt; a dreadful famine, the inevitable con-
" ſequence of theſe ſcourges, threatened the
" colony with ruin; and the ſeverity of it
" began even to be felt when the ſpeedy
" arrival of theſe ten veſſels, loaded with
" rice, quieted the uneaſineſs of the inhabi-
" tants, in the firſt moments of their diſtreſs.
" If, on this occaſion as on many others,
" Foulepointe ſaved the Iſle of France, we
" could no longer hope for the ſame
" aſſiſtance. The fields were uncultivated,
" vated, and commerce entirely annihilat-
" ed. The deſpotiſm of Benyowſki had
" ſpread a general alarm throughout the
" iſland. The Malegaches in conſternation
" fled from the borders of the ſea, and re-
" tired to the interior parts of the country.

" M. de

"M. de Belcombe having aſſembled "Yavi, the ſovereign of Foulepointe, and "the other chiefs of the neighbourhood, "aſked them if they had any reaſon to "complain of the French, and above all "of the fifteen ſoldiers of Benyowſki's "legion, who guarded the harbour of "Foulepointe. Their anſwer to this queſ- "tion was not explicit: they were, doubt- "leſs, afraid that their complaints would "ſerve as a pretence for new perſecutions; "and confined themſelves merely to the re- "queſting of a free-trade. M. de Belcombe "aſſured Yavi and the reſt of the chiefs, "that the French ſoldiers were kept at Ma- "dagaſcar only to protect and ſecure the "liberty of the Malegaches; and he ex- "horted them to cultivate their lands, and "to live in peace with their neighbours. "M. Chevreau took an inventory of the "ſtores belonging to the king; and M. de

"Bel-

" Belcombe, before his departure for the " Bay of Antongil, gave the ſtricteſt and " moſt preciſe orders to the officer who " commanded the detachment, to maintain " diſcipline among his troops, and to put " a ſpeedy end to the uneaſineſs and alarms " of theſe people.

" M. de Belcombe and M. Chevreau " made but a very ſhort ſtay at Foulepointe. " As the principal object of their miſſion " reſpected Benyowſki's eſtabliſhment at " the Bay of Antongil, they proceeded " thither; and M. de Belcombe appeared " at the head of the troops, as inſpector of " the French ſettlements in Madagaſcar.

" I accompanied M. de Belcombe and " M. Chevreau, being ordered by the go- " vernor of the Iſle of France to attend " them on this ſervice.

" Benyowſki's audacity aſtoniſhed me ſo " much that words can ſcarcely expreſs what

" I felt.

" I felt. He at firſt received M. Chevreau
" with haughtineſs, and I may even ſay im-
" pudence.

" M. de Belcombe appeared ſatisfied with
" the military poſition of the ſpot choſen by
" Benyowſki for forming his principal eſ-
" tabliſhment, to which he had given the
" name of *Louiſburgh:* but though this
" place may be eaſily defended, I know
" none more marſhy and unhealthful.

" Louiſburgh is ſituated on a tongue of
" land which advances three hundred fa-
" thoms into the ſea. The ground upon
" which the magazines and houſes are
" built is ſcarcely four feet above the level
" of the water, in the time of high tides;
" and even this elevation has been formed
" by embankments. All the neighbouring
" land is a marſh, which the ſea covers at
" certain periods. The fort, conſtructed
" for the defence and protection of Louiſ-
" burgh,

" burgh, conſiſts of three baſtions, each of
" which is mounted with one cannon. This
" fort is of wood, and is built upon ſtakes
" driven into the earth. I dare venture to
" affirm that both it and the houſes are al-
" ready in need of being rebuilt; for all the
" wood was in a ſtate of rottenneſs, occa-
" ſioned by the moiſture. The tongue of
" land upon which Louiſburgh ſtands is
" connected on one ſide with Port Choiſeul,
" an excellent harbour, and capable of re-
" ceiving ſeveral large veſſels. A ſpacious and
" beautiful river, called by the Malegaches
" Linguebate, gives this tongue of land
" the form of a peninſula. The river Lin-
" guebate is an hundred and eighty fathoms
" in breadth; it is navigable; and I fol-
" lowed its courſe in a boat for the ſpace
" of ſeven leagues. At this diſtance it is
" an hundred and fifty fathoms in breadth.

" On the banks of this river Benyowſki

" has

" has conſtructed ſeveral forts, the moſt " conſiderable of which is, at leaſt, equal " in ſtrength to that built for the defence " of Louiſburgh. The banks of Lingue- " bate river are only four feet high at its " mouth: but the nearer you approach to " its ſource the more this height increaſes. " In following its ſource I was much de- " lighted with the beauty of the neighbour- " ing fields, which preſent a ſpectacle highly " intereſting.

" I at length arrived with M. de Belcombe " and M. Chevreau at a place called, by " Benyowſki, the *Plain of Health*. Be- " tween this place and Louiſburgh we vi- " ſited ſeveral ſmall forts, and fifteen vil- " lages. Benyowſki had boaſted much to " us of the happy ſituation of this place, " which was truly rural; but we found " that its denomination was altogether im- " proper. The *Plain of Health* appeared

" to

" to us to be a very unhealthful ſpot, ſur-
" rounded by mountains, the great height of
" which attracts the clouds, and condenſes
" them into rain. M. de Belcombe re-
" marked to Benyowſki the diſadvantages
" of this poſt: but though they were ob-
" vious, he obſtinately refuſed to acknow-
" ledge them. In vain was he ſhewn the
" defiles in the mountains, which it was
" impoſſible to guard: he ſtill perſiſted
" that this poſt was leſs ſuſceptible of an
" attack than that of Louiſburgh. He main-
" tained that a ſmall battery, which he cal-
" led Fort Auguſtus, ſituated on a peaked
" mount, in the middle of the *Plain of*
" *Health*, would protect and defend his
" eſtabliſhment in ſuch a manner as to re-
" pel an enemy, however numerous. I aſ-
" cended to this fine fortreſs by a paltry ſtair,
" conſiſting of an hundred and fifty ſteps,
" and found it a ſquare of eight fathoms,

" ſurrounded

" ſurrounded by paliſades abſolutely rotten. " Four three-pounders were the formidable " artillery which, on the one hand, were to " protect the navigation of the river Lin- " guebate, and on the other to defend the " grand eſtabliſhment which he propoſed " to form at the bottom of the fort, and to " which he had already given the name of " the *Town of the Plain of Health.*

" This town conſiſted, when we ſaw it, " of a magazine fifty feet in length, and thir- " ty in breadth; and of two other ſmaller " edifices, one of which was intended for " an hoſpital, and the other for barracks. " M. de Belcombe, in my preſence, aſked " Benyowſki, if he had nothing more to " ſhew him. Benyowſki, without being " in the leaſt diſconcerted, replied, My forts " protect the navigation of the import- " ant river Linguebate, and the free navi- " gation of this river renders me abſolute

" maſter

" maſter of the adjacent country. Have I " not in this rendered a very eſſential ſer- " vice to France? Could any thing more " be expected from the forces and funds " which were at my diſpoſal? Would an- " other in my place have done more?— " Would he have done as much? M. de " Belcombe ſmiled, and ſaid, You ſent word, " governor, to the miniſter of the marine, " that you had laid the foundation of a " large town, which you called the *Plain of* " *Health.* Where is that town?—What is " become of it?—Has it diſappeared? for I " ſee nothing here but a few miſerable " huts.

" To this embarraſſing queſtion Beny- " owſki replied, that his funds had failed. " My citadel, added he, has coſt more than " I expected. It was neceſſary that I ſhould " firſt pay attention to the ſafety of the town, " the plan of which I will now ſhew you:

"this project is not a chimera; it will be "carried into execution as ſoon as I can "procure funds ſufficient to undertake it.

"But your citadel, ſaid M. de Belcombe, "is a ſmall pitiful battery, commanded on "all ſides by the high mountains which "ſurround it: this battery of four three-"pounders, placed on the ſummit of a "ſmall mount, can never anſwer the end "you propoſe. Beſides, I here come from "France, by orders of the miniſter, to in-"ſpect your labours, and I cannot avoid "making you acquainted with my reflec-"tions. Permit me to aſk you another queſ-"tion, no leſs intereſting—Where is that "grand highway from Louiſburgh to Bom-"betoc? Enable me, I pray, to give an "account of it to the miniſter. You have "explained the advantages of it to him in "the minuteſt manner. You have told "him that this communication of the eaſt-

"ern

"ern with the weſtern ſide of the iſland "muſt make you ſovereign, as one may "ſay, of the African coaſt, becauſe the port "of Bombetoc is ſeparated from Africa "only by the channel of Mozambique. "That this wild country, interſected by "high mountains, foreſts, and rivers, ſhould "not have thrown obſtacles in the way of "your project, is to me a matter of aſtoniſh-"ment and ſurpriſe.

"That route, ſaid Benyowſki, is traced "out: this is a fact that cannot be con-"teſted. I ſhall ſhew you an itinerary, "and directions to be purſued for traverſ-"ing that chain of mountains which ſe-"parates the eaſtern from the weſtern "coaſt. You muſt leave on the ſouth the "high mountain of Vigagora, and follow, "a few deviations excepted, the road fre-"quented by the iſlanders, when they "come from the coaſt of Bombetoc to the

" Bay of Antongil. Some labour will be, " doubtleſs, neceſſary to render this road " more practicable; but the preſent ſeaſon, " and my ſituation with regard to the " iſlanders, will not permit me, for ſome " time, to engage in that undertaking. If " you wiſh, however, to explore this route, " I will accompany you; and you will " then ſee what difficulties I muſt experi- " ence, before I can overcome thoſe obſta- " cles which are to be ſurmounted.

" M. de Belcombe had neither leiſure " nor inclination to undertake a long and " difficult journey acroſs the iſland of Ma- " dagaſcar, and he rightly conjectured that " Benyowſki had not made the propoſal " but from a certainty of being refuſed. " M. de Belcombe thought it his duty to " obſerve, that he was commiſſioned to in- " ſpect works executed, and not works pro- " jected. Proceeding then to a new queſ-

" tion,

" tion, he aſked him why he had ceaſed to
" ſend rice and oxen to the Iſle of France.
" The wars which I have had to carry on
" againſt the iſlanders, ſaid Benyowſki,
" have deprived, and ſtill deprive me, of
" the proviſions neceſſary for my own
" people. In ſuch a ſituation, how could I
" ſend ſupplies to the Iſle of France? You
" muſt readily ſee that it was impoſſible. I
" can with equal eaſe juſtify the wars I
" have undertaken. I aſſemble a *palabre*,
" and propoſe to the iſlanders plans calcu-
" lated to promote their advantage. They,
" however, not only reject them, but the
" chiefs have the inſolence to threaten me.
" They even do more: a ſignal is given
" for deſtroying me; ſeveral muſkets are
" diſcharged at once; and I eſcape, almoſt
" miraculouſly, from this imminent danger.
" Being vigorouſly ſupported by my ſoldiers,
" I diſperſe the multitude, and frighten them

" by ſome cannon ſhots which I order to
" be diſcharged from the fort. I inſiſt on
" having the heads of thoſe chiefs who
" made an attempt on my life, in the middle
" of a ſolemn aſſembly; but this is refuſed.
" I then call to my aſſiſtance the Samba-
" rives, a people who live on the banks of
" the river Manaharre: five hundred of
" their warriors range themſelves under my
" ſtandards, and enable me to puniſh and
" ſubdue my dangerous neighbours. Being
" compelled to ſue for peace, the articles
" of a treaty were formally agreed on and
" ſanctioned in a grand *cabar* or *palabre*;
" the uſual ceremonies were obſerved; I
" rewarded the Sambarives when I diſ-
" miſſed them; I promiſed to protect and
" defend them againſt the enterpriſes of
" their enemies; and I exhorted them to
" cultivate their lands, as the ſpeedieſt
" mode of remedying thoſe evils which had

" been

" been occaſioned by our diſſenſions. Theſe
" evils are undoubtedly great; the country
" is laid waſte; the principal part of the
" villages preſent nothing to the ſight but
" heaps of aſhes; the lands are left unculti-
" vated; and a famine has been the neceſ-
" ſary conſequence of all theſe diſorders.
" Peace and tranquillity, however, are about
" to be reſtored: the iſlanders, more timor-
" ous and ſubmiſſive, will apply to agricul-
" ture; and will repair thoſe misfortunes,
" which they have brought upon themſelves
" by their odious and criminal plot againſt
" a man who knows how to make himſelf
" be feared and reſpected. The authority
" with which I am inveſted ſhall never loſe
" its force in my hands; I will never ſuffer
" it to be deſpiſed; I will enforce obedience.
" Every military man muſt approve my
" conduct, and adopt my principles. The
" whites ought never to truſt to the friend-

" ſhip of the blacks; they ought not even
" to demean themſelves ſo far as to ſeek for
" it. I am a foreigner, and on that account
" ought to exert myſelf the more in order
" to procure reſpect to the French flag. My
" adminiſtration will reſtore to it that degree
" of weight which the weakneſs of my pre-
" deceſſors made it loſe.——Such almoſt was
" the ſubſtance of Benyowſki's converſa-
" tion. He added invectives of every kind,
" againſt the iſlanders, whoſe character he
" delineated under the blackeſt and falſeſt
" colours.

" We judged that an abſolute want of
" proviſions was the only motive which had
" determined him to preſerve peace. The
" hatred and reſentment of this revengeful
" man had given way only to the moſt ur-
" gent neceſſity. M. Belcombe, being much
" alarmed on this account, endeavoured to
" inſpire Benyowſki with juſter and more
" humane

"humane ideas; and, though he was "convinced of the inutility of his exhorta- "tions and efforts to render the peace dur- "able, he reſolved, on his return to Louiſ- "burgh, to make a new treaty, in order to "convince the inhabitants of Madagaſcar "that he entertained ſentiments truly pa- "cific.

"Benyowſki violently oppoſed this plan, "which M. de Belcombe had formed, of "again aſſembling the iſlanders, for the "purpoſe of confirming the peace; and he "endeavoured to prove, that the holding of "a new *palabre* would be attended with "great inconveniences. His remonſtrances "however were of no avail; the aſſembly "was held on the ſecond of October 1776; "but it was not numerous, and conſiſted "only of an hundred and fifty of the na- "tives. M. de Belcombe, on this occaſion, "renewed the treaty; exhorted theſe peo-

"ple

"ple to cultivate their lands; to avoid all "cauſe of diſcord among themſelves; and "aſſured them that the French eſtabliſh-"ment at the Bay of Antongil had no "other object in view than that of ſecur-"ing to them happineſs and tranquillity. "Sell, ſaid he, what proviſions you can "ſpare to the French, and they will pro-"tect you. Your enemies will then no "longer dare to attack you; and you may, "in future, apply to commerce and agri-"culture with the greateſt ſafety. It is but "doing juſtice to M. de Belcombe to "obſerve, that he neglected no means "which were likely to re-eſtabliſh concord "and confidence among the iſlanders; but "every hope of proſperity was chimerical, "as long as the French ſettlements were "under the direction of Benyowſki. The "iſlanders remained motionleſs, and ſeemed "to be inſenſible to all the teſtimonies of

"friend-

"friendſhip and aſſurances of good will "which were given to them. Benyowſki "appeared to me very much chagrined at "the inſinuations thrown out againſt his "conduct. This was very evident; for "M. de Belcombe wiſhed that his ſen-"timents might not be miſunderſtood, "though he always behaved to the governor "with that deference and reſpect which are "neceſſary for preſerving ſubordination. "Before our departure from Madagaſcar, "I had a converſation with Benyowſki, "on the little advantage which France was "likely to derive from the eſtabliſhment "at the Bay of Antongil. You are right, "ſaid he, in your opinion; but a leſſon "which has coſt two millions of livres, "is not too dear to teach your nation, "that it ought to have allowed me a ſqua-"dron of ſhips, with two millions of livres "for my annual expenditure. Had it then

"ſent

" ſent ſix hundred recruits every year, I " ſhould have raiſed in the courſe of twen- " ty years a flouriſhing and formidable co- " lony. I obſerved to him that the coun- " try was unhealthful; and that five in ſix " of the people ſent thither fell victims to " the inſalubrity of the climate. In anſwer " to this, Benyowſki replied, that by clear- " ing conſiderable tracts of land, during the " favourable ſeaſon, diſeaſes might be pre- " vented, and that the *Plain of Health* was " a healthful ſpot, whatever M. de Bel- " combe might ſay to the contrary. If " I have loſt a great many people, conti- " nued he; and if the eighty who remain, " are either ſick, or in a ſtate of convaleſ- " cence, this deplorable ſituation, in which " you find me, is to be aſcribed to the war " I was obliged to undertake againſt the " iſlanders, and ſtill more to my reſiding at " Louiſburgh. Beſides, it is always much

" eaſier to conquer a colony belonging to " an enemy, than to eſtabliſh one. I agreed " with him in this idea; and quitted him, " much aſtoniſhed at the confidence re- " poſed by the French miniſtry in the " projects of this foreigner.

" On our arrival at the Iſle of France, " that colony began to be in want of pro- " viſions. The reſources of Madagaſcar " had abſolutely failed. It was neceſſary, " therefore, to ſend ſhips to the Cape of " Good Hope; and heavy complaints pro- " ceeded from every quarter, in order to " open the eyes of the miniſtry reſpecting " the miſconduct of Benyowſki."

The journal from which the above account is extracted proves, that the eſtabliſhment formed at the Bay of Antongil was not ſuſceptible of being preſerved.

At the time when it was inſpected by M. de Belcombe, M. de Boynes was not miniſter

niſter of the marine. M. Turgot had ſucceeded to that office; and under the adminiſtration of this prudent miniſter ſuch an eſtabliſhment could not be ſupported. Vain efforts were made to avert the ſtorm, for impoſtors every where find protectors; but ſentence was pronounced; and if it was not put in execution till the adminiſtration of his ſucceſſor, it was becauſe M. Turgot did not remain long enough in office to pay particular attention to this part of his duty. This illuſtrious man, whoſe eminent talents raiſed him far above the generality of his cotemporaries, knew from M. Poivre, that Benyowſki was a dangerous adventurer, who had rendered himſelf the tyrant and ſcourge of the natives of Madagaſcar. Having juſt then returned to Europe, I learned that Benyowſki had made a conqueſt of the iſland of Madagaſcar; and I heard his courage and abilities every where extolled.

I was assured that he had built towns and fortresses; that he had constructed a grand road from Louisburgh to Bombetoc; and all these reveries seriously propagated were so much believed, as to become a subject of wonder and conversation in the city. One was scarcely allowed to doubt the truth of these ridiculous fables; and M. Poivre himself was obliged to undertake the task of refuting them. In the mean time Benyowski, disgraced, arrived in Paris, where he endeavoured to confirm the reports which had been spread of his brilliant exploits in Madagascar. He complained loudly of the injustice of the administration of the Isle of France; and was at length able, if not to justify himself, at least to obtain new rewards. He then insinuated himself into favour with Dr. Franklin: this fact is incontestable, as I was an eye-witness of it; but I cannot reproach myself with having

suffered

ſuffered that celebrated man to be ignorant of what I knew reſpecting this adventurer. Benyowſki, however, went to America, where he had ſcarcely arrived when he again formed a project of getting poſſeſſion of Madagaſcar; and with that view proceeded to the Bay of Antongil, in an American veſſel. I am not acquainted with the object of this expedition; but I know that M. de Souillac, the governor of the Iſle of France, ſent, on the 9th of May 1786, a veſſel, called the Louiſa, commanded by Viſcount de la Croix, to oppoſe Benyowſki's enterpriſes; and cauſed a detachment of ſixty men from the regiment of Pondicherry, under the orders of M. Larcher, a captain of infantry, to accompany him. M. Mayeur, alſo, the principal factor, embarked in the ſame veſſel, in order to give M. Larcher every information neceſſary to counteract the views of Benyowſki; for it

was

was known, that he had ſeized a magazine belonging to the king at Angoncy, a village ſituated to the north of the Bay of Antongil.

The Louiſa caſt anchor at Foulepointe on the 17th of the ſame month; and Count de la Croix, after procuring ſuch proviſions as he ſtood in need of, quitted that port and proceeded to Angoncy. He arrived there on the 23d; but inſtead of anchoring in the bay, the entrance of which is difficult, and the ſituation badly laid down in charts, he choſe rather to anchor at the diſtance of half a league from the ſhore, in the bay of the eaſtern cape near to that of Angoncy. When the veſſel was ſafely moored, M. Larcher prepared to make good a landing; and ſome boats well manned, and having each two pieces of cannon in their bows, advanced towards a part of the coaſt where no obſtacle appeared to interrupt them: but when the

people were juſt ready to go on ſhore, a volley from Benyowſki's troops left them in no doubt reſpecting the hoſtile intentions of that adventurer. A few cannon ſhots, however, diſperſed the enemy, who were ſeen retreating into the woods; and after they had diſappeared, a deſcent was effected without impediment or diſorder. M. Larcher, at the head of his men, wiſhed to march directly towards Benyowſki's ſettlement; but he was unwilling to entangle himſelf in the thick woods, where it would have been impoſſible for him to make uſe of his artillery. The iſlanders therefore, who ſerved him as guides, conducted him by a more open route, which would, however, have preſented inſurmountable obſtacles had it been guarded and defended.

M. Larcher had five marſhes, and a bad bridge, ninety feet long, to croſs, before he could arrive at Benyowſki's ſettlement. It

may

may be readily ſuppoſed that he would not have purſued this route had he been acquainted with the danger of it; but Benyowſki was ſo little afraid that any one could march by ſo difficult a road, that he had neglected to cut down the bridge which rendered it paſſable. This negligence is inconceivable in a man who expected an attack: for it was afterwards known, that he openly ſaid, "The people of Foulepointe "will ſoon come to aſk reſtitution of the "magazine I have ſeized: I am glad of it; "for they will ſave me the trouble of go-"ing to attack them at Foulepointe."

When M. Larcher had paſſed the bridge with his artillery, he diſtinctly heard the noiſe of people at work. A little while after the advanced guard announced that he ſaw a red flag, which is the ordinary ſignal for engaging in this iſland. M. Larcher immediately ordered his men to inſpect their

arms, and to prepare for marching towards the enemy in order of battle. Fifty houſes were then perceived, all regularly placed in a line, one of which, larger and higher than the reſt, was judged to be that of Benyowſki. They had not yet ſeen the fort, as the view of it was intercepted by a ſmall grove of trees: but as ſoon as they diſtinguiſhed it, they obſerved about an hundred men who were retiring to it with precipitation.

This fort, ſituated on an eminence, and ſurrounded by ſtrong paliſades, was defended by two four pounders and a few ſwivels. As ſoon as Benyowſki judged that the French were near enough, he ordered his men to fire the cannon. The firſt diſcharge was with bullets; the ſecond with grape ſhot; and the third with ſmall balls. Theſe three diſcharges were ſupported by a briſk fire of muſketry; but notwithſtanding this de-

fence,

fence, the French continued to advance in good order. When the commanding officer thought that he was at a proper diſtance from the enemy, he ordered them to return Benyowſki's fire. This ſingle volley proved deciſive: Benyowſki received a wound in the breaſt with a ball, which put an end to his exiſtence, at the moment when he was juſt applying a match to a cannon loaded with grape-ſhot. Luckily the priming did not catch fire; had this cannon been diſcharged, it would certainly have occaſioned great diſorder among the French; and might have, perhaps, cauſed their expedition to miſcarry. They were in a ſituation where it was neceſſary for them either to conquer or periſh; they were deprived of every means of being ſupported; all communication with the coaſt was cut off; and they were incloſed in ſuch a manner, that it would have been impoſſible for them to regain their veſſel.

Immediately after Benyowſki's death, the fort ſurrendered at diſcretion. The greater part of the iſlanders ſaved themſelves over the paliſades; and no attempt was made to ſtop them. The object of the expedition was accompliſhed; and M. Larcher had ſtrict orders to treat the inhabitants of the country with humanity. Some of them, who joined the whites, laid down their arms, and ſurrendered themſelves priſoners; but they were the ſame moment releaſed, and reſtored to their full liberty. This generous behaviour induced the chief of Angoncy to come to requeſt peace, and to throw himſelf under the protection of the French. He preſented to M. Larcher an old Portugueſe woman, and the Baroneſs d'Adeſcheins, the widow of an officer who had followed Benyowſki to Madagaſcar. Theſe two women had fled for ſhelter to the chief; and it was in compliance with their entrea-

entreaties that he delivered them into the hands of the French. This chief complained bitterly of Benyowſki's tyranny. He ſaid he had reigned over that fertile part of the country where he was eſtabliſhed with a rod of iron; that he plundered the inhabitants without mercy; and deſtroyed, through fear, the fruits of their induſtry. He was continually adding new taxes to the burthens which he thought proper to impoſe on them; and he violated, in an outrageous manner, the moſt reſpected uſages and cuſtoms. Their vain remonſtrances were rejected with harſhneſs. In treating them as ſlaves, and ſubjecting them to the moſt galling yoke, he wiſhed to make them loſe even the hopes of recovering their liberty. Theſe people were ſubmiſſive to his caprices; his conſummate audacity, his cunning, and ſtill more the impetuoſity of his character, had rendered him abſolute maſter of

Madagaſcar; and, at the time when he was killed, he was preparing to drive the French from the iſland, and even to turn their kindneſſes againſt themſelves.

Generous nation, but too eaſy to be deluded, ceaſe to give way to that enthuſiaſm which has involved you in ſo many evils. Remember that the Malegaches have ſtill to reproach you for abandoning their country to pillage, and to the tyranny of an adventurer, who was, in every reſpect, unworthy of the reception with which you honoured him. You entruſted to this foreigner ſeveral millions of money, and objects of the utmoſt importance. You granted him rewards and marks of diſtinction reſerved for your moſt zealous defenders; but what gratitude did he ſhew for them? He took up arms againſt you; he fired upon your troops; he plundered your magazines. Had not inconſiſtency and imprudence preſided

ſided over all his actions, he would have found means to prevent you from carrying on commerce, or having any intercourſe with Madagaſcar.

The Malegaches, exhauſted by inteſtine wars, had loſt, during the adminiſtration of Benyowſki, almoſt all their good qualities: they were become baſe ſlaves, devoted to the caprices of a ferocious and intractable maſter. Under him the lands remained uncultivated; agriculture was neglected; and commerce interrupted had converted into a deſert, a country once fertile and flouriſhing. This artful man had ſpread the ſeeds of hatred and diſcord among the iſlanders; and his haughty and diſdainful gait united with his impudence and impoſture to overawe the multitude. Through features which diſplayed pride and duplicity, one could ſtill diſtinguiſh a ferocious aſpect, capable of intimidating the moſt intrepid,

intrepid. The events of his life have been only a long ſeries of crimes and villanies; and his death was a juſt puniſhment for his infamous treachery. It was neceſſary either to deliver Madagaſcar from the yoke of this tyrant, or to abandon the colonies of the iſles of France and Bourbon.

Theſe ſavage people had neither ſufficient knowledge nor ſpirit to recover, by themſelves, their loſt liberty; and how could they avoid and eſcape from the ſnares with which Benyowſki had artfully ſurrounded them? This common enemy found means by his duplicity to create diviſion amongſt them. As the French therefore, through their enthuſiaſm, were the authors of all the evils which they experienced, juſtice and equity would have obliged us to go to their aſſiſtance, even had not the intereſt of our commerce rendered it neceſſary. But I have already proved that the Iſle of

France depends in a great measure for its subsistence on the Island of Madagascar, and this dependence is absolute in the time of great calamities. The Cape of Good Hope affords resources then which are distant, expensive, uncertain, and, in every respect, insufficient. It is doubtless much to be wished that some fixed and permanent establishments could be formed in this part; but I have shewn that the insalubrity of the air is an obstacle which cannot be surmounted without sacrificing the lives of a great number of men. From the month of May, however, till the end of October, these shores may be frequented without danger. This is the period most favourable for commerce; it is likewise the time of harvest; and provisions of every kind may be then procured.

REFLECTIONS ON THE NORTHERN PART OF MADAGASCAR.

THE northern part of Madagaſcar is much more fertile in productions of every kind than the ſouthern part. For this reaſon it is more frequented by European veſſels; but the interior part of the country has never yet been viſited. When at the Iſle of France, I in vain endeavoured to procure ſuch information as might enable me to write a deſcription of it. On this ſubject, Bigorne could only give me ſome vague and uncertain ideas, which it was difficult to make any uſe of. It was, however, from what he told me that I drew out, at Manaharre, a ſhort memoir, which afterwards ſerved as a baſis for Benyowſki, to propoſe the forming of an eſtabliſhment at the Bay of Antongil. This memoir contains

contains the itinerary of the islanders, who go from Bombetoc to that bay; but nothing remarkable is to be found in it, except an account of the numerous difficulties which occur in that passage. If the Malegaches surmount these difficulties, it is merely because they are much nimbler, and more inured to fatigue, than the greater part of the Europeans. The high mountains of Vigagora, which must be traversed, present, at every step, obstacles capable of stopping men the most accustomed to brave dangers of every kind. Whoever may be obliged to undertake a journey by this rugged way, ought, if he is prudent, to furnish himself with ropes and poles to climb the steepest places. I know by experience how necessary such precautions are, for I have made use of these helps more than once when travelling in those mountains. When I found myself surrounded by rocks, a

small

ſmall cord held by my guides revived my courage, and facilitated an acceſs to the higheſt precipices. Silk cords are preferable to thoſe of hemp, becauſe they are ſtronger and much lighter. Dr. Franklin propoſes paper kites, to enable people to croſs rivers, the currents of which may be rapid. This method might, doubtleſs, be of utility in certain circumſtances to thoſe who cannot ſwim well. Thoſe, however, who are unacquainted with that uſeful art may, by means of bamboos faſtened to a long rope, croſs very rapid rivers when they have in their ſervice vigorous iſlanders and good ſwimmers, who by this ſimple apparatus can draw them from the one bank to the other. With prudence and induſtry man may ſurmount great obſtacles: there are few above his genius when he has learned early to attempt to overcome ſuch difficulties.

In

In the forests the compass is his guide; and, every where else, mechanics furnishes him with the means of escaping from the most difficult situations. These means vary according to circumstances; but it would be improper here to enter into farther details on this subject. I must, however, observe, that a kind of hammoc like those employed in the colonies for carrying women and children, would be of infinite utility to those who travel in these wild countries. This hammoc must be light and water-proof; it should be made therefore of very strong canvas, covered with gum elastic dissolved in linseed-oil, a kind of varnish used for confining the inflammable air in balloons. Such a hammoc may be employed, not only as a bed, by suspending it between two trees; but, by means of a bamboo, it may be converted also into a vehicle for transporting the traveller

veller from one place to another when he finds himſelf fatigued: and becauſe the canvas, on account of the varniſh, is impenetrable to water, the hammoc becomes a real pirogua, the advantages of which are ſo obvious that it is unneceſſary to explain them.

The place moſt frequented by the Europeans in the northern part of Madagaſcar, is called Foulepointe; but the natives give it the name of *Voulou-Voulou*. The harbour is ſurrounded by a reef of rocks, which break the force of the waves, and ſhelter ſhips from heavy ſeas. The ſhores of it are very bold, and the leaſt depth of the water is twenty-three feet at low tides.

The reef, which conſiſts of coral rocks, is joined to the main land, and ſtretches N. N. E. whilſt the coaſt ſtretches N. N. W.

The entrance of the harbour, which is on the north ſide, is about fifty fathoms in breadth.

breadth. The depth of the baſin is about fifty fathoms: it is capable of containing ten large veſſels, which may anchor alongſide of each other in from thirty to thirty-five feet of water. The ground is ſure; but, in the winter ſeaſon, the entrance is ſhut by a ſhifting ſand-bank, which is diſſipated when the ſouth-eaſt ſucceed the north winds or calm weather. The ſea never riſes or falls more than four or five feet at the time of ſpring or neap-tides. During the latter the reef of rocks appears above the water; and abundance of natural productions may be then found on them, ſuch as moſſes, marine plants, black coral, valuable madrepores, ſea ſtars, inſects, and ſhells, which by the variety of their form, and the brilliancy of their colours, ſerve to ornament the cabinets of the curious. The mouths of the rivers here are bordered with mangles which are loaded with oyſters of

an excellent taſte. Theſe oyſters adhere to the branches, and form cluſters of the moſt ſingular and remarkable figures. At a little diſtance from thoſe parts which the ſea covers, there are found veins of a kind of ſand different from that of the ſhore, and which appears to have experienced a ſemi-vitrification. This ſand is intermixed with ſtones of a ſoft friable nature, interſperſed with an infinite number of ſmall fragments of natural glaſs. Foulepointe, according to the obſervations which I made, lies in latitude 17° 40′ 20″, and longitude 47° 30′. During my ſtay here Reaumur's thermometer never roſe above twenty-ſeven degrees, and never fell lower than fifteen. The barometer experienced very little variation, and always between twenty-eight inches two lines and twenty-eight inches five lines.

Ships can procure at Foulepointe proviſions

ſions of every kind in abundance, and at a low price. The markets are well ſupplied when commerce experiences no check or reſtraint on the part of the Europeans. Some years ago the people of Foulepointe refuſed to ſell hogs and pigs, becauſe an old man who lived at the diſtance of four leagues from the port, and who was accounted a ſorcerer, had forbidden them. This Ombiaſſe pretended that they would be threatened with great misfortunes if they did not endeavour to deſtroy the race of theſe filthy animals: but this prohibition does not prevent the Europeans from procuring them in the mountains, where they may be found in large herds. It would not perhaps be difficult to deſtroy this inconvenient ſuperſtition among theſe iſlanders. The villages in the neighbourhood of Foulepointe are not numerous; they are diſ-

perſed here and there on the declivities of little hills, and are defended only by paliſades. They are agreeably ſhaded by a multitude of uſeful trees, ſuch as the cocoa-nut tree, bamboos, orange and lemon trees, wild vines, and bananas, the fruit of which are ſo much eſteemed by the Europeans: but the moſt remarkable is the *ræven*, a kind of palm-tree known only in Madagaſcar.

This tree, the top part of which is prepared and eaten in the ſame manner as that of the cabbage-palm, riſes to a great height. It is covered with a hard bark, and its wood, which is fibrous and hard, is employed for conſtructing houſes. The walls and partitions of theſe houſes are formed of the ribs of its leaves, which have the ſolidity of wood and the pliability of leather, and which are faſtened together in a very ingenious

genious manner. The leaves ſerve to cover them; and this covering, which laſts a long time, is preferable to our thatch.

It is of the leaves of the raven alſo that the Madecaſſes make their plates, diſhes, and cups. Theſe veſſels are always clean, but they are never uſed more than once.

Under the membranous covering which incloſes the flowers of this palm, is found a gummy ſubſtance of an exquiſite taſte, which one would take to be honey.

It is not ſurpriſing that the Madecaſſes endeavour to be ſurrounded by a tree ſo uſeful. They make very large planks of it by ſplitting it from the one end to the other. Theſe planks, however, muſt be ſtraightened the moment they are ſplit.

The lands belonging to Foulepointe abound with rich paſtures and cattle. When you go along the fertile banks of the beautiful river Ongleby, you are ſurpriſed to ſee

it diſappear all of a ſudden in the ſands, at the diſtance of four miles from its mouth. This river, which is deep in ſome places and in others broad and ſhallow, produces plenty of fiſh, and is covered with water-fowl. Piroguas ſail up it for more than twenty leagues. It is a pity that this river, like all the reſt in Madagaſcar, ſhould be filled with monſtrous crocodiles. The ſight of them often ſtrikes a terror into the moſt intrepid iſlanders when travelling along its banks. Great precaution is neceſſary to avoid the danger of being ſurpriſed by theſe deſtructive amphibious animals. I one day ſaw an ox dragged away and devoured by one of theſe monſters.

What makes the rivers of Madagaſcar delightful renders them alſo dangerous. The trees and ſhrubs which cover their banks ſerve as an aſylum and retreat to theſe formidable animals.

On advancing a few leagues from Foulepointe, towards the high mountains of *Ambotifmene*, the land begins to riſe, and the plains and the valleys are ſheltered from the winds by little hills. The heat here is not incommodious, becauſe the country is high and covered with wood: the low lands, which are leſs cultivated, are more wild and rural. The iſlanders in this part do not keep their cattle, but ſuffer them to wander about without a guide, and without ſhackles.

The meadows, which are ſituated at the bottom of the valleys, are watered by a multitude of ſtreams and rivulets, the windings of which are ſo much the more agreeable as they are formed by the hand of nature. The flowers by which they are enamelled, have more ſplendour, and diſplay a greater variety of colours than thoſe with which our meads are ornamented. Tufts

of trees ſcattered here and there without art or regularity, render the view of theſe rural ſpots delightful and intereſting. Some leagues farther the ſcene changes, and the country becomes mountainous. A ſkilful painter would here be at a loſs to fix upon the moſt pictureſque ſcene. His imagination, bewildered and undetermined reſpecting a choice of objects, would not allow him the free exerciſe of his talent; he could not advance a ſingle ſtep without ſeeing a ſudden and unexpected change produce new proſpects, and the moſt intereſting points of view. But without ſtopping to catch a general ſketch of this beautiful country, if you employ yourſelf in ſtudying its productions, an immenſe and truly uſeful field then opens before you; and a multitude of vegetables diſperſed every where in profuſion preſent themſelves to your reſearches.

You

You will perceive ſix diſtinct kinds of rice; you will ſee barley of a ſuperior beauty; and you will diſtinguiſh ten kinds of yams, ſome of which are as large as one's thigh, and all of them fit for ſupplying food to men as well as to cattle. But beſides theſe roots, which require ſome care and cultivation, there are others abſolutely wild, called by the iſlanders *fanghits*. This root, which is as large as a man's body, has a delicate taſte, and is covered with a reddiſh coloured ſkin. We are aſſured that it both allays hunger and quenches thirſt: it is diuretic, and eaſy of digeſtion.

You may procure alſo various kinds of turnips and beans, with peaſe of an exquiſite taſte.

The *varvattes* reſembles the caper ſhrub, and flowers in the ſame manner. Each pod contains a ſmall pea of the ſize of a lentil.

lentil. This leguminous plant rises to the height of the cherry-tree: in some of the interior provinces its leaves are employed for feeding silk-worms.

When you quit the plains and meadows, to enter those immense forests which serve as a retreat for a variety of wild animals, your imagination is struck with beauties of another kind. Profound solitude, a coolness which surprises you in so warm a climate, shades inaccessible to the rays of the sun, and echoes which on all sides repeat the bellowing of the cattle, still afford you new enjoyments. But these enjoyments do not equally delight all: they seem to be suited in a peculiar manner to those who are of a serious and melancholy disposition: yet, however insensible people may be to the beauties of nature, they will always behold with a kind of enthusiasm that multitude

of trees of a prodigious ſize and height, among which the *faterſbe* is particularly diſtinguiſhed.

Thoſe who prefer the ſtudy of botany to that of mineralogy will find abundance of plants in the mountains of Ambotiſmene to gratify their curioſity. Enormous blocks of rock-cryſtal alſo may be ſeen there, ſome of which are cryſtallized, while others appear to have no regular form; ſome of them contain ſchorl and other foreign bodies. Thoſe kinds of ſchorl in greateſt requeſt among naturaliſts, are common in theſe mountains, as well as indices of tin-mines, which the iſlanders call *voula-foutcheſme*. Iron-mines of an excellent quality are diſperſed in great profuſion all over the iſland, and very near to the ſurface of the earth. The Malegaches break and pound the ore, and place it between four ſtones lined with potter's clay; they then employ a double

a double wooden pump, inſtead of a pair of bellows, to give the fire more ſtrength; and in the ſpace of an hour the mineral is in a ſtate of fuſion. The iron produced by this operation is ſoft and malleable: no better is known in the world. There are, doubtleſs, other mines in this iſland; but thoſe who wiſh to ſearch for them muſt not be afraid of difficulties and labour. Riches of this kind being incloſed in the bowels of the earth, much digging and tedious exertions are neceſſary to procure them: beſides, acceſs to the mountains of Ambotiſmene is impracticable, as the iſlanders ſay, to the Europeans; for their ſummits abound with ſteep rocks and precipices, which prevent them from being approached. The higheſt of theſe mountains is about eighteen hundred fathoms above the level of the ſea. In its ſhape it has a great reſemblance to the Table Mount deſcribed by every travel-

ler who has viſited the Cape of Good Hope.

I can only give this faint ſketch of the mineralogical riches of Madagaſcar. The real riches, however, of this iſland are its numerous vegetable productions, varied almoſt without end by the nature and fertility of its ſoil. I ſhall here give a deſcription of thoſe which I brought to the Iſle of France to M. Poivre.

DESCRIPTION OF TREES, SHRUBS, AND PLANTS, WHICH GROW IN THE NORTHERN PART OF MADAGASCAR, AND WHICH I CARRIED TO THE ISLE OF FRANCE, IN THE END OF THE YEAR 1768.

MALAO-MANGHIT, a large tree, the bark of which is brown, the trunk ſtraight,

ſtraight, and the wood white. Its ſap, at firſt white and milky, becomes, when expoſed to the air, as red as blood. The fruit is a kind of nutmeg. The Malegaches aſcribe to this nut the ſame virtues as we aſcribe to the real nutmeg.

Rarabè. This is a wild nutmeg-tree, larger and much more beautiful than the *malao-manghit.* It furniſhes a nutmeg from which the Malegaches extract a very aromatic oil. This oil, with which they rub their bodies and hair, is efficacious in curing and diſſipating cold humours. Taken internally it ſtrengthens the ſtomach.

Bachi-bachi. The bachi-bachi reſembles the rarabè; but its leaves and fruit are a little different. It grows in elevated places. Its fruit, as well as the covering which contains them, is aromatic.

Rhara-horac is a real wild nutmeg-tree, the trunk of which is large, and the branches buſhy.

bushy. It delights to grow in moist marshy places. The *founingo-mena-zabou*, a large pigeon of a blue colour, is very fond of the fruit of this tree. After digesting the mace, it sows the nuts throughout the whole island.

Ravend-sara. Of all the nutmeg-trees in the island of Madagascar the ravend-sara has principally engaged the attention of botanists. The odour of cloves, cinnamon and nutmegs is not much different from that of a kind of perfume extracted by distillation from the leaves of this tree. They yield an essential oil much more esteemed than that procured from cloves. The cooks in India employ this perfume for ragouts, in preference to any other kind of spicery. This valuable tree grows in moist places; but a dry soil is not absolutely contrary to its nature. It becomes very large and bushy; its top, which is of a pyramidal

pyramidal form, is well furniſhed with leaves; its wood is white, exceedingly hard as well as heavy, and deſtitute of ſmell, but the bark exhales a very ſtrong odour. Its fruit is a real nut flattened at the two extremities. The perfume of the nut, and the huſk in which it is incloſed, is not ſo ſtrong as that of the leaves, but in my opinion it is much more delicate.

Harame. The harame is the largeſt and talleſt kind of tree that grows in the neighbourhood of Foulepointe. The wood of the trunk appears whitiſh externally, and of a reddiſh colour in the heart. When it has attained its utmoſt ſize, it every year caſts its outer bark, which is thick and grey. The trunk is ſmooth and without branches, except at the upper extremity; but its branches are well furniſhed with leaves, and the buſh on its top has a very beautiful appearance.

The

The ſmalleſt inciſion made in this tree produces, in great abundance, a white reſinous gum, which has a very ſtrong aromatic ſmell. The Malegache women make it into a kind of paſte with which they rub their faces, in order to preſerve the freſhneſs of the ſkin.

When this reſinous gum is burnt, it exhales a perfume like that of incenſe. The fruit is a nut, the huſk of which, only, is aromatic.

Laben. This tree grows in ſandy places on the ſea-ſhore, and riſes to a very great height. Its wood, which is hard, and of a reddiſh colour, is proper for being employed in cabinet work. The fruit of the laben is of the ſhape and ſize of a large olive. The kernel it contains is white and oily, and has a delicate taſte.

Fouraha. The fouraha is one of the moſt beautiful and uſeful trees to be found

in warm climates. The wood of it, next to that of *Tec*, is the beſt in India for conſtructing veſſels. It may very properly be compared to the *Tacamaca* of the Iſle of France. Like that tree it yields a balm of a green colour, which is excellent for curing wounds. This tree, which is large and buſhy, is loaded with branches of a great ſize, and is remarkable for its prodigious height.

Tevartna. The tevartna exhibits, in the midſt of the foreſts, all the ſymmetry of art. It ſeems to have been cut on purpoſe into a pyramid conſiſting of ſeven ſtories; and its buſhy branches, placed horizontally around a ſmooth ſtraight trunk, give it an appearance altogether ſingular. It is, perhaps, the moſt beautiful tree known for decoration.

Hintchy. This tree, the moſt common of all thoſe found in the foreſts near Foulepointe,

pointe, is exceedingly proper for forming avenues, as its top is well furniſhed with leaves. It reſembles the plum-tree, and riſes to the ſame height. The wood, which is of a red colour, may be uſed for cabinet work. Its bark is ſmooth and white; and the leaves are large, and of a beautiful green.

Foterſhè. The foterſhè is one of the largeſt trees in Madagaſcar; but its wood is fit only for fuel. Another kind of *foterſhè*, deſcribed by Flacourt under the name of *vouafoutra*, grows in the marſhes.

Tanguem. This tree grows on the borders of the ſea. Its wood, which is hard and variegated with veins, is proper for cabinet and inlaid work. The Malegaches make too much uſe of the fruit of this tree, to the dangerous qualities of which they are no ſtrangers. It is a real manchineel, which, as is well known, produces one of the moſt formidable of poiſons.

Antafara. The antafara is known in the Iſle of France under the name of milk-wood. Its flowers have the ſame ſmell and ſhape as thoſe of jaſmine. If a ſlight inciſion be made in the trunk of this tree, it yields, in great abundance, a milky juice which is of a very cauſtic nature.

Aſſy. This tree, which is a beautiful kind of palm, riſes to the height of ten feet. Its trunk is marked with the impreſſion of its leaves, which are continually falling in ſucceſſion. Its top is crowned with three or four rows of leaves, four or five feet in length, and an inch and a half in breadth. Theſe leaves reſemble thoſe of the lily: they are as thick as one's hand, and form a beautiful umbrella.

Tafoumouna. The wood of this tree, which is large and buſhy, is white, and its bark ſmooth. Its fruit is a real acorn, like that of the oak. The kernel has a taſte

ſome-

ſomewhat aromatic, and ſmells like turpentine.

Hounits. The wood of the *hounits* is of a beautiful yellow colour. The bark is red, and when an inciſion is made in it, a juice red as coral iſſues from it. By the help of a common lye the Malegaches extract a fine red dye from the bark of the root. The *hounits* is large and beautiful.

Zavin-raven. This tree riſes to a moderate ſize, and is not bushy. The trunk is full of knots; the bark is grey, and the wood white. It grows in marſhy places.

Lingo. The lingo is a woody creeping twig, which aſcends to the ſummits of the higheſt trees. This twig is only two inches in diameter. Its wood is yellow, as well as the interior part of the bark.

The Malegaches employ the root and bark of the *lingo* to dye thread red and yellow.

Harongan. This tree, which is about fifteen feet in height, grows in a ſandy ſoil. Its leaves are uſed to dye mats and baſkets red. The gum extracted from it is a kind of dragon's blood.

Tancaſſon. The tancaſſon is a kind of wild vine, the fruit of which is ſour, and ſomewhat agreeable to the taſte. This twig riſes to the tops of the higheſt trees. Its root is diuretic. The iſlanders eſteem the fruit of the *tancaſſon*. Flacourt, who has deſcribed ſeveral kinds of wild vines, makes no mention of it.

Taco. A kind of wild vine like the *tancaſſon.*

Voua-lomba. A kind of vine, the fruit of which the Europeans prefer to all others, and which they call *Madagaſcar grapes.* Their taſte is ſomewhat ſouriſh. This plant dies every year. Its root is a kind of yam.

Aanakuey; A large ſenſitive plant.

Areſou.

Areſou. A ſpecies of elder.

Tougnounan. The flowers of this tree are ſhaped like a bell; and the wood of it is uſed for making aſſagays.

Tafoumounan. Small white flowers: fruit like an acorn.

Racoudrit. A green fruit that grow in cluſters.

Uvang-biri. A paraſite plant bearing large ſquare pods, the ſeeds of which are anti-hemorrhoidal.

Tevarte. A pyramidal ſhrub, cut naturally into ſtories.

Azambou. Has a fruit which grows in the form of a red noſegay.

Uua-be-Taïtchou. Produces a fruit good to eat.

Sampan-leva. Has a fruit in the form of a yellow chaplet.

Tchingit. A kind of baſtard ſenna tree, with yellow flowers.

Lacca. Bears a ſmall fruit like a grain of pepper. Its flowers grow in the form of the bezel of a ring.

Vognindoſong.

Fanpechourou. A kind of lily in the form of a ſtar. This flower announces the ſeaſon for whale fiſhing.

Voua-hintchi.

Filao. Equiſetum arboreſcens.

Voantliſan. A prickly tree, bearing no leaves but on the top.

Tchuvi-ovi. A kind of ipecacuanha, ſeriploca.

Jacuan. A ſpecies of almond-tree, without leaves, which produces gum.

Timbalave. Shrub with white gondolated flowers.

Anpalt. Has round leaves which file iron.

Anghivi. Its fruit gives a bitter but agreeable taſte to the liquors drunk by the Madecaſſes.

Azon-

Azon-Ranou. A freſh-water mangle, the pods of which grow oppoſite to each other.

Farafer. A paraſite plant, the flower of which is long and red, and ſhaped like a man's hand, or a fork with five prongs.

Vongo. A beautiful tree, the fruit of which is called Vaas-ſou-vara. When an inciſion is made in its trunk, it produces a yellow gum.

Voua-mitſa-voi. A ſpecies of aſter, or ſtar-wort.

Tongouna-lein-tein. Kind of mint.

Sanoang-matan-nahanrou. Kind of creeping aſparagus.

Ranga-zaa. Bulbous plant with a white flower.

Tchilotou. White tulip.

Fifoutche. Tree with leaves like thoſe of mallow. Flowers grow around the trunk.

Schira. Palm-tree, the bark of which is burnt

burnt in order to extract a ſalt from it, uſed by the Malegaches with their food.

Raven-tongharts. Balſamic plant.

Tanroujou. Kind of benjamin, bearing a button-ſhaped fruit.

Azou-ranou. Shrub, the fruit of which is of a cinnamon colour.

Afatrahè. Shrub, the bark of which is odoriferous.

Vaing-bare. Paraſite plant; its leaves are downy, and its flowers white.

Talate. Bears thick leaves, and berries like thoſe of the holly.

Jang. A tree which produces large bunches of flowers.

Vua-tani. Has a flower like that of the lihoa of China.

Vua-montucung. Paraſite plant, with leaves like thoſe of the tamarind-tree. Its fruit reſembles a bean.

Fua-toutouc. Shrub, with red fruit, which

are

are eaten, and which taſte like ſtrawberries.

Moulton-rongou. Reſembles the *rara.* Its leaves are ſmall, and the fruit oblong and angular.

Vouang-titirang. Produces a kind of nut, the huſk of which is downy, and of a yellow colour.

Voua-malim. Bears a pod like the apocynon.

Voua-rougni. Kind of freſh-water mangle.

Voua-ſourindi. Large tree with ſmall red flowers diſpoſed in cluſters.

Ampali. Has long leaves, uſed for poliſhing wood, and freeing iron from ruſt.

Joudi-faſal. Semper vivens.

Voua-ſevarantou.

Vouang-taè. Malum cidonium.

Voua-ſatre. Kind of box. Its fruit, which are aromatic, are eaten.

Enghi-panza. Small ſpecies of indigo.

Enghi-

Enghi-be. Large indigo with big pods.

Vua-macoliong. Kind of tamarind, from which an oil is extracted.

Sacaviro-ambou. Hog-ginger. A kind of zedoary.

Vua-fao. Species of the ſago palm.

Ouvi-rombè. Creeping twig, the leaves of which are ſmall, and ſhaped like a ſharp-pointed heart.

Chifontſui. Has ſmall leaves diſpoſed in pairs, like thoſe of the leſſer *harame.* Its flowers conſiſt of four green leaves incloſed in a calyx.

Vua-honda. Bears a fruit of the form of a cucumber, which ſmell like a quince.

Sangnamou-batou. The leaves of this plant have the ſame effect as thoſe of the cocculus indicus. When uſed to catch fiſh, they muſt be bruiſed.

Vaint-rombeu. Herb endowed with the ſame properties as the above.

Sanga-

Sanga-Sarga. A triangular kind of bulrush, the real *papyrus.*

Vua-toudinga. Bears a fruit like the *pipar* of China.

Vua-carabo. A kind of twig which bears a fruit like a large cheſtnut.

Vua-nantoula. Bears a fruit which contains a large kernel like the ſeeds of the ſapotilla, but much thicker.

Vouang-pin-lela. Has leaves like thoſe of the cinnamon-tree, without any ſmell.

Vua-tingui-le-pas. Produces a fruit of a green colour, the pulp of which diſpoſed in coats opens like the petals of a flower. The ſeeds are found in the heart, incloſed in a bag with three round corners.

Anja-oidy. Kind of very high heath.

Vua-tchirié. Species of *vacoua* with long narrow leaves.

Vua-khicaſon. Bears a ſmall fruit like the *rangouſtan.*

Tchouti-morou or *ranou.* Small ſiliquous plant.

Vua-hia-vavè. Creeping twig with female white flowers.

Vua-nambouavon. Bears red fruit diſpoſed in the form of a noſegay. The flowers are of a violet colour; the leaves, which are whitiſh, and which grow in pairs, are uſeful for healing wounds and ulcers.

Vua-rha. Kind of fig-tree, the fruit of which are eaten.

Vua-he-taïtſou.

Varou. Kind of mallow.

Lindem. Species of palm.

Angnan-rambou-lahe.

Tongou-hintchi.

Harame. The gum of this tree appears to be of the ſame nature as ambergris.

Chingolpont.

Chſtala.

Alut-mandreut.

Vanghoui-nangboua.

Bakrang. Creeping twig which bears large berries like buttons.

Ardouranga. Small plant, with a red filiquous flower like indigo.

Vaguinang-boua. Shrub with white downy leaves, and white flowers. Its root heals wounds.

Cani-pouti. Grafs with large leaves, the juice of which is employed for making figures on the body.

Thipoulou-pouli.

Adabou. Large tree.

Ouci-randra. An aquatic plant with indented leaves; flowers fhaped like a crefcent; root fit to be eat.

Tottlas. Kind of laurel, the leaves and berries of which are aromatic.

Voua-honda. Bears a large fruit like an oblong cylindrical mango. It has a fweet odour,

odour, and its ſeeds are ramified. The leaves are placed exactly oppoſite to each other.

Mouncu-founace. A ſhrub with violet flowers. The leaves are diſpoſed by threes.

Azou-minti. Curious pyramidal ſhrub.

Azou-minti-be. The ſame with large leaves. A beautiful tree.

Tocam-boudi. A ſmall palm with large leaves divided at the extremity.

Fouraugdra. A kind of creeping twig which bears a triangular bladder. Its leaves are like parſley.

Voua-mandroucou. Produces flowers which grow from the trunk. The petals have a ſpiral form.

Voua-mena. Bears a ſweet fruit as red as coral. The wood and the leaves are alſo red.

Mang. Tree, the leaves of which are like

like thoſe of the mallow, but larger and ſtronger. Its flowers are downy like thoſe of the *ketmia*, and of a roſe colour.

Angua-malou. Kind of aromatic ſhrub, with flowers like golden buttons.

Volang-bondi-pouni. Red wood, which turns black as it grows old. This wood is proper for dying.

Tſimanaſoo. Creeping twig, the flowers of which are like thoſe of jaſmine, and of a bright red colour.

Manouquibonga. Shrub compoſed of twigs like the vine. Its flowers, which are beautiful, and red, are diſpoſed in the form of a plume of feathers.

Maan. Kind of downy plant, with leaves like thoſe of the mallow.

Sommoutorang. Bears a downy flower, in ſhape like the bezel of a ring.

Lalong.

Via-foutchi. Woody creeping twig. The fruit is incloſed in a ſtar-like calyx.

Diti-azou. Has a fruit like a ſmall pear.

Tavoutala. Small bulbous plant. It is a ſpecies of orchis, and bears a flower of a flaxen colour.

Chetchia. Kind of hieracium, with a yellow flower.

Angnan-rambou. Another hieracium, with a violet-coloured flower.

Catoubanda. Kind of chickweed, employed to diſſipate ſwellings.

Nantou. Mat-wood of two kinds, with large and ſmall leaves.

Amp-elang-thi-ſouhe. Gentianella, with a violet-coloured flower.

Campoudi. Kind of chickweed, or alſine.

Onbave. Tree which produces a gum like gum-arabic.

Bontou. Tree the root of which dyes yellow.

yellow. It grows near water: its leaves are thick and diſpoſed in pairs.

Voai-marang. Shrub the bark of which ſtops fluxes.

Vuendrang. Kind of galega.

Aſé. Large polipodium, the ſeeds of which are eaten.

Tabourounangat. Betel tree.

Vua-rozan.

Voua-aſſim.

Ampelantghi. Beautiful plant which riſes to the height of a foot.

Sondi-fa-fat. Plant found on the borders of the ſea. The Malegaches when fatigued rub their bodies with the leaves of this plant, and ſuch frictions render them freſh and nimble. They pretend that the leaves of the *Sondi-fa-fat* are incorruptible. They are applied with ſucceſs to wounds.

Vognin d'oſmg. Paraſite plant, the leaves of which reſemble thoſe of the lily. The

period when this plant flowers announces the time of whale-fiſhing. It flowers in June. The prows of the piroguas which are intended for the whale-fiſhery are ornamented with large bunches of its flowers.

Azimena. Very beautiful ſhrub with a buſhy top. Its leaves are thick, and of a bright green colour. It riſes to the height of four feet; and its flowers exhale an exceeding ſweet odour.

Teulon-gouala. A ſhrub the leaves of which are odoriferous, and ſerve the Malegaches to make pillows. It is about four feet in height, and its fruit are bitter, oily, and aromatic.

Vouc-azigné. The ſtraighteſt and talleſt tree found in Madagaſcar. It greatly ſurpaſſes in height all the other trees of the iſland. Its wood, which is yellow, hard, and heavy, is employed for building houſes; but more commonly for making the keels of

of piroguas. The gum, which diſtils from this tree, is as yellow as amber; but it is viſcous and without ſmell. The Malegaches procure from this valuable tree a kind of clear oil, which when freſh has a very agreeable taſte. This oil mixed with rice renders that food more delicate; and it is for the moſt part prepared in this manner by theſe iſlanders.

Tougmonnam. Tree which grows on the ſummits of the mountains. Its wood, which is hard and heavy, is of a red or brownish yellow colour, and is uſed for cabinet work and aſſagays.

Vohan-ſilan. Tree twelve feet in height. Its trunk, which is ſtraight, is covered with prickles; and its leaves, which are four inches and a half in length, and two and a half in breadth, are of a beautiful green colour. There are no leaves on the trunk of this tree; but its top, which is perfectly

round, is loaded with them. The wood-pigeons are remarkably fond of the fruit of the *voban-filan*, the appearance of which is altogether ſingular.

Toulouc. Buſhy ſhrub which grows in every kind of ſoil. The fruit of this ſhrub has an agreeable taſte, and is known under the name of the Madagaſcar ſtrawberry. It is eſteemed by the Europeans as well as by the Malegaches.

Voua-ſeverantou. Buſhy ſhrub which riſes to the height of ſix or ſeven feet. It grows commonly in a ſandy ſoil. Its wood is white.

Chi-ſent-fui. Beautiful ſhrub, the ſtem of which is ſtraight, and without leaves. Its top is round and buſhy.

Finguere. Kind of wild fig-tree, which, when inciſions are made in it, yields a milky juice. This juice, after it coagulates, forms a real elaſtic gum, like that which diſtils from

from the caoutchouc. The Malegaches make flambeaux of it, which burn without wicks, and afford them an excellent light when they go out to fiſh in the night-time. Spirit of wine makes no impreſſion on this gum; but it diſſolves in æther and linſeed-oil. There are alſo other fat and oily ſubſtances which affect it very ſenſibly.

The *fuguere* riſes to the height of twenty feet. Its leaves are eight inches long, and four in breadth. Its fruit reſembles a round fig, and is full of ſmall ſeeds. The Malegaches eat this fig with pleaſure: but for my part I found it bitter and cauſtic.

On attentively examining the bottles and other veſſels which the Peruvians make of elaſtic gum, it may be readily comprehended how eaſy it would be to employ it in chirurgical operations. Belts and bandages made of this ſubſtance would be attended with many advantages. Diſſolved in linſeed-

oil or æther, it in a great meaſure loſes its elaſticity, and in that ſtate it is very proper for coating over ſilk, in order to render it impervious to air or water. M. Bernard lately has employed elaſtic gum for a variety of purpoſes, which it would be too tedious to enumerate. I muſt, however, obſerve that the Chineſe have been long acquainted with the art of diſſolving this elaſtic gum, and of giving it various colours. M. Bertin, miniſter of ſtate, was ſo kind as to ſhew me ſeveral articles made of it, the moſt remarkable of which was a ſmall ball, perfectly reſembling a ball of amber.

Bagnets. Plant from which real indigo is procured in Madagaſcar. The iſlanders extract this dye from it by a very ſimple operation. When the plant begins to flower, they infuſe the ſtem and the leaves in water. After they have become putrid, the water aſſumes a violet colour, and when this co-

lour

lour grows very dark, the ſtem and leaves are taken out. A certain quantity of oil is then poured into the coloured water, and the water being drawn off, a ſediment remains behind, which, when dried in the ſun, furniſhes a beautiful indigo.

M. de la Marck made me obſerve that the *revendſas* is not a nutmeg-tree, but a proper genus. It is the bagatophyllum*.

The *intchy*, according to the opinion of that learned botaniſt, is a *courbaril-hymenæa*.

The antafara, according to the ſame, is a ſpecies of the genus called *taberna-montana*.

The *filao* is the *caſuarina* of Forſter and Linnæus the ſon.

The *vua tchirie* is the *pandanus*.

In the enumeration, here given, of the trees and plants of Madagaſcar, I have made no mention of ananas, white pepper, water-melons, bananas, Indian ſaffron, the large

* *Juſſ. Gen.* p. 431.

carda-

cardamum, ginger, veronica, alkekengi, purſlain, ſweet baſil, ſtar-wort, gentianella, the winter cherry, the papyrus of the ancients, called *ſanga-ſanga*, the nenuphar, &c. &c. With regard to the animals found in Madagaſcar, Flacourt has left nothing of importance for me to ſay on that ſubject.

DESCRIPTION OF A TREE, WHICH BEARS A SINGULAR FRUIT, MUCH CELEBRATED IN INDIA, AND KNOWN UNDER THE NAME OF THE COCOA OF THE MALDIVES.

THE tree which bears that fruit, known under the name of the *Cocoa of the Maldives*, or the *ſea-cocoa*, riſes to the height of forty or fifty feet. The top of this beautiful tree, which may be claſſed among the palms, has the form of a fan; and is compoſed of ten or twelve branches, twenty feet long.

long. Each of these branches, or palms, proceeds from a pedicle six feet in length, which is indented quite round.

From the bottom of the leaves arises a ramified panicle, the branches of which are terminated by female flowers. The pistil of these flowers, when ripe, produces a spherical fruit, eight or ten inches in diameter. The covering of the fruit is thick and fibrous, like that of the common cocoa. The shape of these cocoas, however, is extremely singular; and the bottom of them is filled with a milky substance, of a bitter and disagreeable taste. The trunk of this tree differs very little from that of the cocoa-tree; but it is larger and harder. The Isle of Palms is covered with this tree: but it is not to be found in any of the neighbouring islands, or in any other known part of the world. It is probable, therefore, that those nuts which are accidentally found at the Maldives

dives have come from the Iſle of Palms, though the diſtance between theſe two places is about three hundred leagues. This remark may ſerve to point out the direction of the currents in the Indian Ocean.

The Indians aſcribe great medicinal virtues to this nut, known to botaniſts under the name of *nux medica*. The Aſiatic phyſicians pretend that it is antiſcorbutic; that it radically cures the venereal diſeaſe; and that it is a powerful antidote againſt poiſon. The Indian princes cauſe cups to be made of it, which are always more or leſs ornamented with gold and precious ſtones. Theſe cocoas are in ſo much requeſt all over Aſia, that it was not uncommon, about the year 1759, the period when they were diſcovered, to ſee them ſold for upwards of four hundred pounds ſterling each.

DESCRIPTION OF COCHINCHINA.

THE kingdom of Cochinchina, which is about one hundred and fifty leagues in length, extends from the eleventh to the twenty-ſeventh degree of northern latitude. On the north it is bounded by Tonquin; on the ſouth by Ciampa and Camboja; on the eaſt by the Indian Ocean; and on the weſt by the kingdom of Laos, and a ſavage people named the Kemouys. Its greateſt breadth does not exceed twelve or fifteen leagues. It is divided into eleven provinces, four of which, *Dinheat*, *Quambing*, *Dinhgnoè*, and *Huè*, lie towards the north. *Huè* is called the Royal Province; and its capital is diſtinguiſhed by the ſame name. The ſeven ſouthern provinces are *Cham*, *Quangzhia*, *Quinhin*, *Fouyen*, *Fanriphanrang*, *Nanlang*, and *Bounay*. The laſt province has been lately conquered from the Camboges.

Huè,

Hué, which contains the royal city, where the kings of Cochinchina reſide, is the moſt beautiful of all theſe provinces. For about ſixty years, ſince Cochinchina and Tonquin were ſeparated, the royal city has had no other remarkable edifices than the king's palace and ſome pagodas: the reſt of it is very ill built. This capital is ſituated near a large and beautiful river, which was formerly ſo deep as to be capable of bearing ſhips of great burthen; but ſince a dreadful inundation, which happened about five or ſix years ago, ſand-banks have been formed at its mouth, ſo that ſmall veſſels only can enter it.

The city of Huè is interſected by canals after the Chineſe manner, in order to facilitate the tranſportation of merchandiſe, and for the convenience of the inhabitants, who are pretty numerous, and who could not endure the great heats of ſummer without bathing

bathing two or three times a day. The king maintains about twelve or fifteen thouſand ſoldiers around his palace, to protect his perſon as well as to defend his ſtates; and near three hundred neat galleys, which, in the time of war, ſerve to convey troops from one place to another, and in the time of peace to carry the monarch when he travels: for he never quits his palace but in that manner. Thoſe which he uſes are extremely beautiful, and even richly gilt: eſpecially thoſe of his women, part of whom always accompany him wherever he goes. This prince keeps, beſides, four hundred elephants trained to war; and it is in the number of theſe animals that the ſtrength of his kingdom conſiſts.

The government of Cochinchina is monarchical. The ſovereign is abſolute maſter of the whole kingdom, which he governs with the aſſiſtance of his four principal miniſters,

niſters, two of whom are called his right hand, or *Tha*: and two his left hand, or *Huan*. Theſe miniſters have the power of appointing to all employments, both civil and military.

Each province is under the management of a governor, who both commands the militia, and adminiſters juſtice: in the province of *Phanriphanrang* the governor has the title of viceroy. The whole militia are divided into two diſtinct bodies, ſea and land ſoldiers, and both of theſe are divided into regiments.

The king's houſehold is compoſed of the fineſt men to be found in the kingdom. The moſt beautiful company of theſe is that which is diſtinguiſhed by the title of *golden ſabres*. The men of this company are picked from all the other companies. They are the ſtrongeſt, as well as the braveſt, and their authority, conſequently, is much greater.

The

The king who was on the throne in the year 1744, was the ninth who had governed Cochinchina after its ſeparation from Tonquin. He was a tall, well-looked man thirty years of age. At firſt he had only the title of *chua*, or ſovereign: but at the fourth moon of the above year he declared himſelf *vua*, or king. What emboldened him to take this ſtep was, the diſmal ſituation to which he knew Tonquin was reduced by the civil wars that had ravaged it for almoſt ſix years. Until that period, he contented himſelf with the modeſt title of *chua*, through a dread of being attacked by the Tonquineſe, whoſe king pretends to be *vua* of Cochinchina.

TAXES.

THE king of Cochinchina is rich in gold

and money, of which he has always ſeveral edifices full. His great wealth ariſes from a tax paid by all his ſubjects from the age of nineteen to that of ſixty. This tax is greater or leſs according to the ſtrength and ſituation of each individual. Every three years the governor of each province cauſes a new liſt to be made out, of all thoſe who, according to law, have attained to the proper age of taxation. To enable him to do this, the chief of every village forms a liſt with great care, and carries a copy of it to the governor, who orders all thoſe whoſe names are inſerted in it to appear before him on the day appointed. They all ſtrip themſelves from head to foot: the mandarin then cauſes his officers to examine them; and thoſe who are robuſt and well proportioned, and who ſeem to have moſt ſtrength to labour, are taxed at a higher rate than thoſe who, being feeble and weak, or in a bad ſtate of

health,

health, can with difficulty gain a livelihood. This tax, which goes into the king's treaſury, is paid according to the ſtrength or ſituation of each individual, either in gold, money, or rice. Every year, in the ſeventh month, the taxes of all the provinces are tranſported to court with great pomp and magnificence. On this occaſion there are great rejoicings in the capital for a month, during which the people are employed in feaſting, ſeeing plays, artificial fire-works, and diverſions of various kinds.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

THE Cochinchineſe, compared with the Indians, are brave, active, and induſtrious. They are fond of truth, and cloſely adhere to it when they know it. They are, however, poor and ignorant; but extremely

polite to each other, and to ſtrangers. They have a great eſteem for the Chineſe, on account of their learning; and they call their empire *Moedaiminh*, or the *kingdom of light*: but ſince the miſſionaries have reſided amongſt them, they ſeem to have a greater reſpect for the Europeans. The king, above all, is very fond of them; and encourages them to frequent his ports for the ſake of carrying on commerce with them. The Cochinchineſe are much addicted to women; and polygamy is allowed amongſt them. A man generally has as many wives as he can maintain; and the law gives him great authority over them, as well as over his children. Women convicted of infidelity to their huſbands are condemned to be expoſed to the fury of elephants. The women, who are not remarkable for their modeſty, go quite naked to the middle; and they publicly bathe, without any ceremony,

in

in the view of every body. In their perſons, the Cochinchineſe have a great reſemblance to the Chineſe, except that they are more tawny: their women are beautiful and very fair. Their dreſs is the ſame as that which was uſed in China before the irruption of the Tartars. The mandarins of letters in Cochinchina have adopted the Japaneſe dreſs. They preſerve their hair, on which they ſet great value, and particularly the women, ſome of whom have it ſo long that it reaches to the ground.

RELIGION.

THE religion of this country is the ſame as that of China. The people frequent pagodas erected in honour of *Fo-hi* and *Tchoua*, and their mandarins of letters go to the temple of *Confucius*, who is their maſter, as

well as that of the Chineſe. At preſent the Chriſtian religion is tolerated, and makes great progreſs. Some princes and mandarins of the firſt rank are Chriſtians. We may reckon that there are about ſixty thouſand people in the whole kingdom who have embraced the Chriſtian religion.

LITERATURE.

ALL the learning of the Cochinchineſe conſiſts in their being able to read Chineſe books, and in acquiring a knowledge of the morality which they contain. It is this knowledge which qualifies them for becoming mandarins.

Woods and Forests.

COCHINCHINA is only a chain of mountains, the valleys and plains between which are well cultivated. The eminences are abandoned to tygers, elephants, and other animals of various kinds. The mountains, though uncultivated, are covered with woods and foreſts, the timber of which is of great utility. The Cochinchineſe procure from them roſe-wood, ebony, iron-wood, ſapan, the cinnamon-tree, calembouc, ſandal wood, and in general all thoſe kinds of wood which are uſed in India for conſtructing houſes, barks, and furniture; or from which gum, balm, and perfumes are extracted. I have even heard it aſſerted by ſome of the natives, that the clove-tree is to be found in theſe mountains.

Gold Mines.

THE Cochinchineſe procure alſo from their mountains various other productions, ſuch as honey, wax, rattans, and gamboge. They find there, likewiſe, ivory, and even gold, in pretty large quantities. Mines of this metal are very abundant. The moſt celebrated are thoſe in the province of *Cham*, ſituated in a place called *Phunrac̀*, where the French miſſionaries have a church, and where there are a great number of Chriſtians. This place is about eight leagues diſtant from *Faiſo*. There are other famous mines in the province of *Nanlang*. Every body, even foreigners, are allowed to work theſe mines; and they would be very productive, did the inhabitants of the country give themſelves the trouble to dig them; but there are few people who chooſe to apply

apply to this labour, and thoſe who do ſo, are very ignorant of the art of mining. They never dig deeper than the height of a man. In the place where I ſaw them at work, maſſes of pure gold, perfectly free from the mixture of extraneous bodies, and weighing two ounces, are ſometimes found. This gold, collected in duſt or ſmall fragments, is afterwards formed into cakes, and carried to market, where it is ſold like other merchandiſe. The uſual price of it, according to the Chineſe value, is an hundred and thirty *quans**; but it has been ſold ſometimes for an hundred and ſeventeen. A great many mines of iron, which in this country is ſold at a dear rate, are found alſo in the mountains.

* The reader will ſee the value of a *quan* in the article of Money.

Other Productions of the Country.

LAND in Cochinchina, when cultivated, is extremely fertile, and the people reap every year two crops of rice, which is ſold almoſt for nothing. This country abounds with all the fruits of India, ſuch as ananas, mangoes, citrons, oranges, and with many others peculiar to itſelf. It produces alſo plenty of pepper, together with arec and betel. Arec, in ſeveral provinces, forms the principal riches of the inhabitants; and large quantities of it are every year ſold to the Chineſe, who come hither to procure it. They have alſo abundance of cotton; but they are not acquainted with the art of making it into fine cloth. They cultivate mulberry-trees, upon which they feed ſilk-worms, and manufacture a kind of coarſe ſilk ſtuffs. They do not, however, ſucceed but in ſome kinds of

of ſatin. Raw ſilk is here ſold at a very dear rate: a Cochinchineſe foot coſts ſometimes two hundred *quans*. The Cochinchineſe ſugar is undoubtedly the fineſt in India, and this article alone brings immenſe ſums from the Chineſe merchants, who carry cargoes of it from *Faiſo* to Canton and Japan, where they gain at leaſt four hundred per cent. by it. The beſt is ſold for four *quans* the Cochinchineſe foot. It is almoſt all made in the province of *Cham*, near *Faiſo*. The Cochinchineſe cut their canes before the end of three years, and have a crop annually in the autumn. None of thoſe kinds of grain which we have in Europe grow in Cochinchina, except maize, or Turkey corn. It produces neither wheat, barley, nor rye, and even few peaſe or beans. It is indeed very ill ſupplied with thoſe vegetable productions which form the riches of our kitchen

kitchen gardens; and this, perhaps, is owing to the people being bad gardeners.

AGRICULTURE.

THE Cochinchineſe employ buffaloes only in cultivating their lands. Theſe animals are ſtronger than oxen, and ſupport themſelves better among the mud of the rice-fields. They have, however, a great many oxen; but they are ſmall, lean, and almoſt of no uſe. They have no ſheep, and their butchers' ſhops are very ill ſupplied with proviſions. To make up for this deficiency, they are rich in poultry: fowls, ducks, and pigeons are ſold cheap, and game may be procured for little or nothing. Theſe people never eat fiſh, though they have them excellent, and in great plenty:

plenty: their rivers, as well as the ſea, abound with them.

COMMERCE.

WITH regard to the commerce of this country, it may be obſerved, that the Cochinchineſe are neither rich, nor well acquainted with the nature of trade. As to foreign trade, they never carried on any, except with the Chineſe and the people of Japan; but the latter, about twenty-five years ago, gave up all intercourſe with them, by order of their ſovereign, who forbade his ſubjects to go out of the kingdom. The like prohibition was made in Cochinchina; and, on that account, the Cochinchineſe are obliged to be contented with ſuch merchandize as the Chineſe bring to them. The inhabitants of Cochinchina, however, are

far inferior to the Chineſe in acuteneſs; and the latter, therefore, find very little difficulty in over-reaching them. The articles brought them from China are generally tutanag; yellow, red, and white copper; tea, porcelain, embroidered ſilk ſtuffs, drugs, and medicines of every kind; ſuch as rhubarb, birthwort, ginſeng, celadine, ſpiceries, and a great many roots, of which the Chineſe ſell large quantities. The Chineſe carry thither alſo abundance of paper, which is uſed for burying the dead; gilt and coloured paper for their pagodas and ſacrifices; and a little nankeen, together with paintings of all kinds, vermilion, azure, orpiment, and canvas, and cotton cloth. *Sommes*, a kind of Chineſe veſſels, go from *Honang*, loaded with all ſorts of earthen-ware and kitchen utenſils, for which they find a ready and profitable ſale. Thoſe *ſommes* which come from the eaſtern coaſt of China, or from

Emouy,

Emouy, or *Ning-po*, bring ſometimes with them the merchandiſe of Japan, which they diſpoſe of to great advantage, and particularly copper and ſword-blades.

The *ſommes* which come from the coaſts of *Camboja* and *Siam* bring worked copper, drugs, cardamom, peltries, &c.

The articles of merchandiſe which the Chineſe import from Cochinchina, are gold, ivory, eagle-wood, ſugar-candy, arec, wood for cabinet work, and for dying, pepper, muſk, a certain kind of ſalt-fiſh, birds neſts, and drugs which the Cochinchineſe procure from their mountains, ſuch as the horns of the rhinoceros, gamboge, &c. The Chineſe *ſommes* take in return gold, ſugar, and horſes: theſe animals are ſold at a cheap rate in Cochinchina. The manner in which the Chineſe carry on trade in Cochinchina is as follows: As ſoon as they arrive in ſight of the harbour, they find Cochinchineſe pilots,

lots, who conduct them in. Theſe piſots, who are of the rank of mandarins, have orders to be always in readineſs to afford this aſſiſtance to ſtrangers. When they have come to anchor, the captain, with ſome of his officers, goes on ſhore, and repairs to court with a general liſt of his goods, and ſuch preſents as are intended for the king. It may be proper here to obſerve, that buſineſs and contracts of every kind begin and terminate with preſents; and it is of great importance to bring ſuch as may be agreeable to the ſovereign; becauſe, if he is ſatisfied, he exempts the veſſel from paying the duties of anchorage, which are conſiderable, and which are higher or lower according to the nature of the merchandiſe with which it is loaded. The Chineſe pay ten per cent. agreeable to an ancient tarif, which determines the price of all commodities imported. On his return from court, the

the captain unloads his veſſel, and tranſports his goods to a factory, which is viſited by the mandarins who preſide over the cuſtoms, in order to ſee whether they can meet with any thing curious, or that might be agreeable to the king, or the principal mandarins of the kingdom. Theſe mandarins of the cuſtoms preſent a liſt of what they wiſh to buy; and if they find among the cargo any of the articles in their liſt, they ſeparate them from the reſt, and ſettle the price with the captain, who muſt be contented with a bill payable in two or three months. Before this viſit, the captain can diſpoſe of nothing: he muſt alſo be very exact, and make no omiſſion in the liſt which he preſents to the king on his arrival; for if the mandarins of the cuſtoms ſhould find any thing not mentioned in the liſt, the conſequences might be very diſagreeable. He muſt, likewiſe, give ſome preſents

to the miniſter, and to the principal commiſſioner of the cuſtoms, who, in Cochinchina, is always a powerful mandarin, and ſtyled *Onlaibotao*. With regard to the ſale of their merchandize, the Chineſe apply to ſome of the mandarins, who readily become merchants when any thing is to be gained, and who purchaſe the deareſt and moſt valuable articles. For objects of leſs importance, there are truſty women, well acquainted with commerce, who each take charge of a few lots, on receiving a ſmall ſum for their trouble. An European captain who might go to this country, would eaſily find rich chriſtian merchants to aſſiſt him.

MONEY AND THE VALUE OF GOLD AND SILVER.

MERCHANDIZE in Cochinchina is paid for with gold and ſilver; but oftener with

caches,

caches, the only kind of coin uſed in the country. They are ſtrung after the Chineſe manner; and each ſtring contains ſix hundred, which are equal to a *quan*. The *quan* is divided into ten *tiennes*, or *maſſes*, which contain each ſixty *caches*. The Cochinchineſe have no denomination for money lower than the *tienne*. Below the *quan* they reckon by *caches*, and above it by *chue*, each of which makes ten *quans*, or ſix thouſand *caches*. The *quan*, or *tael* of Cochinchina makes therefore only ſix Chineſe *maſſes*; and the *maſs*, in China, is equal to the tenth part of a *tael*. The Chineſe *tael*, conſequently, is equal to one *quan*, ſix *tiennes*, and forty *caches* of Cochinchina. Gold and ſilver are here articles of merchandize; but they have fixed prices, and are cheaper or dearer according to the quantity which the Chineſe annually bring them. The people of Cochinchina are not acquainted with the value of our piaſtres. They

melt them into cakes, containing each fifteen piaſtres, which were long worth twenty-two or twenty-three *quans*: at preſent they are worth only from ſeventeen to twenty. By carrying theſe piaſtres to Cochinchina, the Chineſe acquire a profit which they would not get by ſelling them at home, where a piaſtre is worth no more than ſeven hundred *cathes*: but in Cochinchina it is reckoned to be equivalent to at leaſt eight hundred. They chooſe, therefore, to carry ſilver thither ſometimes rather than other merchandize, which they might find it difficult to ſell, and on which they could gain nothing; for their profit depends not ſo much on the goods which they import into Cochinchina, as thoſe which they export from that country. The value of gold riſes and falls in the ſame manner, according to the number of buyers. At the time when the Chineſe *ſommes* arrive, it cannot

not be purchaſed in the market for leſs than one hundred and thirty *quans*; towards the period of their departure, it riſes to one hundred and fifty: but if it be purchaſed in the winter time, that is to ſay, between the firſt of June and the end of the Cochinchineſe year, a period which correſponds with our months of October, November, December, and till the month of March the year following, it may be procured for an hundred and ten, and even an hundred. Thoſe who are well acquainted with the country, may find means to purchaſe it at a ſtill lower rate.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

THE meaſure uſed by the Cochinchineſe, for buying and ſelling, contains about two of our *French* feet. This meaſure, which is called *thiae*, is conſequently one half,

wanting an inch, ſhorter than our yard, and ſix *pontes* four *condorins* longer than the Chineſe *cove*. They have no other, except that uſed for rice, which the poor, alone, purchaſe by meaſure. It is equal to about ſix Cochinchineſe pounds. This pound contains fourteen ounces more than ours, and ten more than the Chineſe, which is equivalent to twenty French ounces. It is, therefore, equal to thirty French ounces.

In this country, there are certain kinds of goods, ſuch as ivory, and calambac wood, which are prohibited; that is to ſay, the king alone reſerves the right of felling them. Theſe two articles cannot be purchaſed but from the ſovereign. Thoſe who might purchaſe them from private perſons, would run a great riſk of being puniſhed. All kinds of merchandize, in general, whether purchaſed from the king or individuals, are exempted from duty. Merchants,

chants, therefore, may carry them on board their veſſels, when, and in whatever manner they chooſe.

Sea Ports.

THERE are ſeveral ports in Cochinchina, the moſt conſiderable of which is that called by the inhabitants *Hoyan*, and by the Portugueſe *Faifo*. It is ſituated in the province of *Cham*, in the latitude of ſixteen degrees, and ſome days journey diſtant from court. This harbour has ſufficient depth of water, and ſhips may remain in it in perfect ſafety. It is extremely commodious for merchants, as their veſſels may anchor cloſe to the factories. The entrance of it, which is the mouth of a large river that comes from the mountains of *Laos*, and traverſes the province of *Cham*, is extremely eaſy. *Faifo* is the place of greateſt trade in Cochinchina;

there are here always about ſix thouſand Chineſe, who are the richeſt merchants, and who have married in the country, and pay tribute to the king. It contains two churches, one belonging to the Portugueſe jeſuits, and the other to the Spaniſh Franciſcans. The governor of the province reſides at the diſtance of a league, in a place called *Reta*, which lies upon the banks of the river, and where the French miſſionaries have a church. Merchants who arrive at *Faifo* always find factories to be let, the largeſt of which generally coſt about an hundred piaſtres for the trading ſeaſon.

In the province of *Quinhin* there is another port called *Nuoeman*, that is to ſay, the *Port of ſalt water*. This harbour is ſafe, and well frequented, but not ſo much as that of *Faifo*. It is not however convenient, as it is at ſeveral days journey from court, to which captains are obliged to go frequently.

frequently. It would, nevertheleſs, be commodious for ſhips which went thither to procure ſilk or arec, becauſe theſe two articles are found in that province. Beſides theſe, there are ſeveral other ſmall ports, eſpecially in *Nanlang*; but they are neither ſufficiently ſafe nor deep for large veſſels. The Chineſe never frequent them, on account of their diſtance from court.

COMMERCE WHICH MIGHT BE CARRIED ON BY THE EUROPEANS IN COCHINCHINA.

WITH regard to the commerce which might be carried on by the Europeans in Cochinchina, it may be eaſily ſeen by the preceding account, what kinds of merchandize might be procured there, either for tranſporting to China, and the coaſts of

India, or even to Europe. The great difficulty would be, reſpecting the goods which ought to be carried thither. On this ſubject the following remarks may be uſeful.

The Cochinchineſe ſet a great value upon every thing that comes from Europe. Many articles of little conſequence in France, are highly eſteemed by them, ſuch as toys, glaſs ware, and light ſtuffs, particularly thoſe of a red colour, which would in Cochinchina find a profitable market. All kinds of arms manufactured in Europe, eſpecially ſword-blades made after the faſhion of the country; and all ſorts of jewels, from diamonds to common cryſtal, would alſo be purchaſed at a high rate, by the ſovereign, and the great mandarins. The latter would take, likewiſe, gold and ſilver wire, on which one hundred per cent. might be gained; but it would be proper not to carry a large quantity of theſe articles. Braſs is

ſold

ſold in Cochinchina at leaſt for four *quans* the Chineſe foot: ſomething, in my opinion, might be gained on that commodity. Sulphur too, which ſells there at a great price, might be carried thither, as well as quinquina, to the virtues of which the Cochinchineſe are no ſtrangers, Canadian Ginſeng, and other European drugs and medicines. We have many kinds of goods in France, which would be too dear for theſe people; but ſmall quantities of them might nevertheleſs be ſold to great advantage: ſuch, for example, as the ſilk ſtuffs of Lyons, embroidered with gold and ſilver, which the Cochinchineſe uſe for making bags to hold their betel and tobacco: part of their magnificence conſiſts in having ſeveral of theſe bags richly ornamented. One might alſo carry to Cochinchina ſome pieces of ſcarlet cloth, tapeſtry made in imitation of that of Perſia, and a few pieces of that kind

of

of linen which is manufactured in Britanny. Among the toys, bracelets and ear-rings of pinchbeck ought not to be omitted. There are many other things which would doubtleſs anſwer for the trade of that country; but experience alone can determine thoſe which would be in the greateſt requeſt. When the Europeans ſend thither ſome veſſels loaded with European goods, they will be then able to learn what will ſuit the Cochinchineſe market beſt.

Should any European merchants freight a veſſel to Cochinchina, they muſt, as I have obſerved, ſend preſents for the king, elſe their veſſel would run the riſk of being very ill received. The preſents moſt likely to afford ſatisfaction to the king, would be mirrors, watches, jewels, ſilk brocades, chryſtal toys; optical machines, ſuch as a teleſcope, magic lantern, cylinder, &c.; mechanical curioſities, hand organs, and woollen tapeſtry

and

and carpets. Such articles would be very agreeable to the ſovereign of Cochinchina, who is curious, and has an excellent taſte. He is fond of European manufactures, and prefers things of uſe to things which ſerve only for amuſement. Preſents intended for the mandarins ought to be of the ſame kind, but of leſs value; and ought to be diſtributed according to the dignity of each. One would be expoſed to the danger of creating enemies, if, in the diſtribution of theſe preſents, thoſe given to one claſs of mandarins ſhould be equal to thoſe given to another.

Beſides the advantages which the French colonies might derive from the commerce of Cochinchina, in going thither to take in cargoes either for the coaſts of India or China, they might even find others in that country of a different kind, which would appear more ſubſtantial and valuable to thoſe acquainted with the real intereſts of a colony,

colony, and which might be of the utmoſt utility to it. They might procure there people to work in their ſugar-houſes and ſilk manufactories, as well as carpenters and labourers of every kind. This, in my opinion, ſeems to be an object of very great importance, and to merit particular attention.

I do not pretend, by this ſhort deſcription, to convey a thorough idea of Cochinchina. I wiſhed only to point out, in a curſory manner, what I conſidered as moſt neceſſary to be known, ſhould it be hereafter thought expedient to eſtabliſh a commercial intercourſe with that diſtant country.

MEMOIR

MEMOIR

ON THE

CHINESE TRADE.

By M. BRUNEL.

IN an age when it is well known that the preponderance of ſtates is regulated by their commerce, an object of ſo much importance ought to be appreciated according to its juſt value. This is the beſt method of contributing to the glory and proſperity of a kingdom; and, on that account, it ought to engage the attention of every good citizen. Whether we conſider commerce as external or internal, it is equally ſubject to laws; but both are ſubordinate to neceſſity, or the abundance of the moment. It depends

depends equally on the productions of different countries, and the induſtry of their inhabitants : for commerce really is nothing but an exchange of theſe productions, the quality and price of which are determined by various circumſtances.

France, by the fertility of its ſoil, and the mildneſs of its climate, produces every thing neceſſary or agreeable, with a profuſion which renders it independent of all other countries. It has, therefore, long deliberated on this important queſtion, whether it ought to concentrate its commerce within itſelf, or to extend it to foreign nations? This, however, is no longer a problem. Reaſon and calculation, ſupported by experience (that daily leſſon the leaſt equivocal of any), ſeem to have fully reſolved it. We have even cauſe to hope, that the opinions of mankind will be no longer undecided in a matter ſo intereſting.

The

The advantage of not confining the productions of a particular climate to one canton, and of communicating the enjoyment of them to diſtant regions, has been fully felt. It has been obſerved, that, ſince the Europeans experienced new wants, their deſires have been excited by new objects: a taſte for the commodities and arts of other countries, has been diffuſed amongſt them. It would, therefore, be impolitic to interrupt that reciprocal communication which ſubſiſts between nations. This would be ſhamefully devoting ourſelves to become tributary to our neighbours, and to ſuffer the balance to incline altogether in their favour.

Our Indian commerce, without doubt, has created more new wants among us than real riches; but it would occaſion great loſs to abandon that branch of foreign trade to other nations, who would not fail to profit

by it. Our ſage legiſlators are ſo much convinced of the truth of this obſervation, that they have endeavoured to remove thoſe reſtraints which impeded its progreſs and proſperity. They have aboliſhed that check of excluſive privilege which viſibly obſtructed it; and delivered it from the oppreſſion of an odious monopoly, which, inſtead of being a national object, concerned only a few individuals, who ſtudied more the increaſe of their own private fortunes, than the good of their country.

The deſire of gain is the only thing which excites the induſtry of the Europeans, in their commerce with the Chineſe, ſince they might live very well without their productions. Cuſtoms, however, ſoon degenerate into wants, or at leaſt into diſagreeable privations, which are nearly ſimilar. We wiſh for ſuperfluities; and China, of all the Aſiatic countries, is that

which

which furniſhes them in the greateſt abundance. An extenſive and profitable trade, proportioned to the wants of the inhabitants, may conſequently be carried on there, when we have acquired juſt notions reſpecting the principal commodities which it produces.

CHINESE MONEY.

THOUGH there are in China rich mines of gold and ſilver, they are not allowed to be opened, for fear, no doubt, of cauſing too great a circulation of money. It is under this view of political and commercial intereſt, that we ought to conſider a prohibitory law, which proceeds, indeed, from the ſpirit of the government; but this reaſon, too ſubtle to be perceived by the people, is exhibited to them under a more

engaging aſpect, and as a ſpecious motive of humanity: it is, as we are told, that the lives of the ſubjects of the empire may not be ſacrificed. Theſe valuable metals, therefore, being procured from other nations, the Chineſe have introduced no other current money than *caches*, and halfpence. Of theſe there are two ſorts, one of braſs, and the other of copper. They are both mixed with toutenag; but the alloy being much leſs in the halfpence, they are of more value.

Various Chineſe characters may be obſerved on theſe pieces. Thoſe at the top and bottom expreſs the name of the emperor in whoſe reign they were coined; and thoſe on the ſides ſignify *valuable current things*, that is to ſay, *current money*.

There are ſome bankers who carry on a traffic with them; but in buſineſs of this kind, the Europeans never have any concern. In China there is no current

money,

money, except these *caches* and halfpence. Payments are made only by weight; and the Chinese are often even obliged to clip gold and silver, in order to settle their accounts, when they either pay or receive. The instrument which they use for this purpose, is called *kias-tien*, in French *tapchine*.

Gold and silver, for the payment of large sums, is weighed in scales; and for those of from fifteen to twenty *taels*, a small steelyard is employed.

The Chinese reckon by *leang*, *tsien*, *tuën*, *ly*, and *hdo*; in the room of which the Portuguese have substituted the words *tael*, *mas*, *condorin*, *cache*, and *hau*.

1 Tael	is equal to	10 Mas.
1 Mas	——	10 Condorins.
1 Condorin	——	10 Caches.
1 Cache	——	10 Haus.

A tael is worth about an ounce of silver.

A hundred taels make 750 French livres, or about thirty-two pounds ſterling.

As money is not received in China but by weight, ſpecie of every kind is taken, of whatever nature it may be; but the quality of it is carefully examined. This is called *ki-ynsè*, and *nouſs-tok*: the former of which repreſents our deniers for ſilver, and the latter our carat for gold.

The current fineneſs of ſilver is ninety-four, to which ſtandard all coins, whether above or below, are reduced. The fineſt ſilver is ninety-eight, and in trade paſſes for an hundred. Hence it happens that a piece of ſilver, gilt, which is acknowledged to be of the fineneſs of an hundred, would be taken for an hundred and two.

The piaſtres of our colonies were formerly taken at the rate of ninety-five, whereas thoſe of Mexico were received only at that of ninety-four; but the Chineſe, the ſhrewdeſt of mankind in reſpect to a knowledge of money

ncy and metals, having obſerved the alteration found in the former, and eſpecially in thoſe coined ſince 1729, refuſe to take them, at preſent, in exchange for gold, or in payment of merchandize.

The French crown, of the value of ſix livres, was taken formerly at the rate of ninety-five; but, at preſent, it is received only for eight *mazoirs*, according to its weight.

The duties of the emperor, or of the cuſtoms, are received only in ſpecie at the ſtandard of an hundred: for theſe duties there is a certain tarif.

The Europeans, who trade together in their *haus*, or factories, generally value

	Livres.	Sols.
The French Louis d'Or, at	24	0
The French Crown - -	3	0
The Tiël - - -	7	10
The Silver Rupee - -	2	8
The Piaſtre - - -	5	6
The Gold Pagoda - -	8	0

	Livres.	Sols.
The Dutch Florin -	- 2	4
The Cruzado - -	- 2	10
The Pound Sterling -	- 22	10

Gold Ducats and Sequins according to their weight.

GOLD.

THE Chineſe have gold of different *tchis*; but they never give it to ſtrangers, except at the ſtandard of ninety-three. The moſt eſteemed comes from Cochinchina. It has the form of ſmall bars, and is of a greater degree of fineneſs than common gold. It is ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed by the different figures imprinted on it; but it is not always free from adulteration. It ſometimes happens that the mark ſignifies the *tok* to be ninety-three, when, in the inſide, it is really only ninety-one. This fraud is committed by putting the bar into the fire with brick-duſt and ſalt. The gold then comes forth

forth from the fire purified on the outſide; and the Chineſe having imprinted a falſe mark on it, ſell it for gold of a ſuperior quality. Great attention, therefore, is neceſſary to avoid deception in purchaſing this article.

The method employed by the Chineſe to aſcertain the fineneſs of gold, and to guard againſt fraud, is as follows.—They put a piece of gold into a crucible, and purify it thoroughly, by making the alloy evaporate. This is done by means of a certain powder, which they throw into the crucible. A thick ſmoke immediately ariſes; and the ſame operation is renewed till the ſmoke ceaſes, which ſhews that the gold is perfectly pure. A ſmall quantity of the liquid gold is then poured into a hole made on purpoſe between two pieces of marble, where it aſſumes the form of a ſmall plate, an inch in length, three lines in breadth,

and

and of the thickneſs of a ſixpence: on the plate they write, *Pure gold.*

Among the metal which remains in the crucible, they throw a ſilver penny; and from this gold, diminiſhed one penny in its fineneſs, they form a ſecond plate; upon which they write, *Gold of ninety-nine.*

The like operation repeated a third time, gives them a third plate; upon which they write, *Gold of ninety-eight.*

Continuing, then, in this manner, they form as many plates as they chooſe from a piece of gold, which decreaſes always in fineneſs proportionably to the ſilver mixed with it in the crucible.

Generally they have twenty or thirty of theſe plates, each with an inſcription which exactly ſhews its real fineneſs or quality. They afterwards form a kind of bracelet of them; and the merchant, who purchaſes gold, either in cakes or ingots, firſt tries it

by comparing it with his plates. He then bruiſes on a piece of black marble, a kind of bean, that leaves behind it an oily viſcous matter, upon which he rubs the gold; and by comparing the colour on the marble with the plates of his bracelet, its reſemblance to ſome of them appears, which conſequently determines the real value of the gold. By theſe means the Chineſe merchants avoid all deception.

Gold at Canton is generally valued by the ſtandard of an hundred taels: that is to ſay, ten taels of gold, of the fineneſs of ninety-three, is commonly equivalent to an hundred taels of ſilver; becauſe, in China, gold is ſold, or rather exchanged, for ſilver.

WEIGHTS.

THE Chineſe weights are the *pic*, the *caty*, and the *tael*, which are uſed alſo by the

the Europeans. The *pic* correſponds to our hundred weight; the *caty* to our pound; and the *tael* to our ounce.

The *tael* of weight, as well as the *tael* of money, is divided into *maz*, *condorin*, and *cache*. The *pic* is valued at one hundred and three French pounds, of eight ounces each; and a hundred *pics* are equal to 650 *taels*, 4 *mas*, 6 *condorins* $\frac{6}{10}$ Chineſe weight. All groſs goods, ſuch as tea, toutenag, &c. are weighed in balances with ſcales like ours, which are called *tien-ping*. For ſmaller articles, a ſteel-yard, named *ten-gorge*, is employed; and for thoſe which are ſtill leſs, another ſort, called *ty-teng*.

MEASURES.

THE Portugueſe, and, in imitation of them, the other nations of Europe, give the

the name of *cob* to the Chineſe meaſure. It contains one foot, eight inches, three lines; and, therefore, it requires three cobs, one ſixth, to make a French ell. The Chineſe foot is called *tchi*, and is divided into ten inches.

Accompts.

The Chineſe do not calculate with the pen, but with a board, having ſmall wooden balls ſtrung upon it, at certain diſtances, two of which are at the top, and five at the bottom. Each of theſe balls at the top is equal to five, and thoſe at the bottom to one. When they have caſt up a ſum, they mark it on the board: when a ſecond is caſt up, it is immediately added to it, and generally without any error. This operation is performed with the utmoſt facility. The board uſed for this purpoſe is called

ſoüon-pan, or *board for reckoning*. The names which the Chineſe give to their cyphers, and the manner in which they expreſs them, are as follows:

1 y	一
2 cule	二
3 ſan	三
4 ſec	四
5 ou	五

MERCHANDIZE.

TEA.

TEA grows on a ſmall ſhrub, the leaves of which are collected twice or thrice every year. Thoſe who collect the leaves three times a-year, begin at the new moon which precedes the vernal equinox, whether it falls in the end of February, or the beginning of March. At that period moſt of the leaves are perfectly green, and hardly fully expanded:

panded: but theſe ſmall and tender leaves are accounted the beſt of all; they are ſcarce, and exceedingly dear.

The ſecond crop, or the firſt for thoſe who collect the leaves only twice a-year, is gathered about the end of March, or the beginning of April. Part of the leaves have then attained to maturity; and though the other part have acquired only half their ſize, they are both collected without any diſtinction.

The third, or the ſecond for ſome, and laſt crop, is more abundant, and is collected about the end of April, or the beginning of May, when the leaves have attained to their full growth, either in ſize or number. There are ſome people who neglect the two firſt crops, and who confine themſelves entirely to this; the leaves of which are ſelected with great care, and diſtributed into claſſes according to their ſize and goodneſs. Tea

ought

ought to be rejected as of a bad quality, when old, and as it were withered leaves are found amongſt it: which may be eaſily known, by infuſing a little of it in water; for then the leaves dilate, and return to their natural ſtate.

The leaves of the tea ſhrub are oblong, ſharp-pointed, indented on the edges, and of a very beautiful green colour. The flower is compoſed of five white petals diſpoſed in the form of a roſe, and is ſucceeded by a pod of the ſize of a filberd, containing two or three ſmall green ſeeds, which are wrinkled, and have a diſagreeable taſte. Its root is fibrous, and ſpreads itſelf out near the ſuperficies of the ground.

This ſhrub grows equally well in a rich as in a poor ſoil. It is to be found all over China; but there are certain places where the tea is of a better quality than in others. Some people give the preference to the tea

of

of Japan, but we have reaſon to doubt whether there is any real difference.

The manner of preparing tea is very ſimple: when the leaves are collected, they are expoſed to the ſteam of boiling water, in order to ſoften them; and they are then ſpread out upon metal plates, placed over a moderate fire, where they acquire that ſhrivelled appearance which they have when brought to Europe.

In China there are only two kinds of the tea-ſhrub; but the Chineſe, by their induſtry, have conſiderably multiplied each of them. If there are therefore large quantities of tea in that country which is exceſſively dear, there is ſome alſo very common, and ſold at a low rate. The Chineſe, however, are very fond of good tea, and take as much pains to procure it of an excellent quality, as the Europeans do to procure excellent wine.

Bohea Tea.

THE Chineſe name of this tea is *vou-y-tcha*, that is to ſay, tea of the kind called *vou-y*. It takes its name from a mountain in the province of Fokien.

There are three kinds of this tea; the firſt of which, called common bohea, grows at the bottom of the mountain; the ſecond, called *cong-fou*, or *camphou*, grows at the top; and the third, named *ſaot-chaon* *, grows in the middle.

Cong-fou-tcha means bohea tea better prepared, and *ſaot-chaon* ſignifies quinteſſence. The latter is thus named, either becauſe growing on the middle of the mountain, and being ſheltered from the injuries of the weather, it acquires a greater degree of fine-

* The names of the laſt two kinds are in England corrupted into *congo* and *ſouchong*.

neſs

neſs than the reſt; or becauſe none of the leaves are gathered, except ſuch as are full and juicy.

The *ſaot-chaon* tea ſold to the Europeans, is nothing, therefore, but *cong-fou* tea of a ſuperior quality. The three ſhrubs diſtinguiſhed by the above names, are in every reſpect the ſame; and the only difference of the tea conſiſts in the manner of preparing it.

Bohea teas, in general, ought to be dry, and heavy in the hand: this is a ſign that the leaves have been full and juicy. When infuſed, they ought to communicate to the water a yellow colour, inclining a little to green, which indicates that they are freſh, for old tea produces a red colour. Care muſt be taken, above all, to avoid red leaves, and to chooſe ſuch as are large and entire. This alſo is a ſign of freſhneſs; for the longer tea is kept, the more it is ſhaken,

which breaks the leaves, and mixes them with a great deal of duſt. It ſometimes happens, however, that the tea-duſt is owing to the manner in which it is put into the box, as the Chineſe tread upon it with their feet, to make it hold a larger quantity. The leaves of the *cong-fou* and *ſaot-chaon* teas ought to have a beautiful black ſhining tint, to be large and weighty, and to communicate to water a very bright colour, and a mild taſte.

The *pekao* is a particular kind of tea-ſhrub, the leaves of which are all black on the one ſide, and all white on the other. As the real *pekao* tea is very ſcarce and dear, even in thoſe places where it grows, the Chineſe, who ſtudy the art of adulterating their teas in general, take care, when this valuable ſort is collected, to put into it a great many more black than white leaves. They adulterate it, likewiſe, by mixing with it ſome of the

ſmall

ſmall half-grown leaves, as yet white, which grow on the top of the common bohea tea-tree. This changes the quality of the *pekao*; for theſe leaves being ſcarcely formed, can have very little ſap or flavour.

GREEN TEA.

GREEN Teas do not grow in the ſame places as the Bohea tea. They are brought from the province of Nankin, and are diſtinguiſhed into three ſorts. The firſt is known under the name of *ſonglo tea*, but oftener under that of *green toukay*; the ſecond is called *lin tea*, and the third *hayſſuen tea*. There are alſo ſome other kinds; but the greater part of them are unknown, or of little importance to foreigners. The *ſonglo* and *hayſſuen* teas come from the ſame ſhrub.

Their only difference is in the manner of their being prepared.

Bin tea grows on a different ſhrub, the leaves of which are thicker and larger than thoſe of other kinds.

All theſe teas ought to have a green leaden tint: the older they are, the leaves become more yellow, which is a very great fault. They ought alſo to have a burnt or ſcorched ſmell, not too ſtrong, but agreeable: for when they have been long kept, they have a fiſhy ſmell, ſomewhat like that of pilchards. The French wiſh to find in green teas, and particularly in *ſonglo*, and imperial, an odour ſimilar to that of ſoap.

In theſe different kinds of tea which I have mentioned, there is a particular diſtinction to be made, as they are generally claſſed into one, two, or three kinds, according to the periods at which they were gathered.

TEA IN BALLS.

IN China there is a kind of tea called *poncul-tcha*, to which the Europeans give the name of *tea in balls*. It is procured from the province of *Fle-tchien*, or *Yunnan*, and is a compoſition or mixture of different teas formed into balls. When it is uſed, a ſmall quantity of it is cut off, and ſuffered to infuſe a much longer time than common tea. It is not agreeable to the taſte, but it has the peculiar virtue of curing diſorders of the breaſt, and facilitating digeſtion. Some of this tea is brought alſo from *Siangyang*, a town in the province of *Houquang*, but it is inferior in quality to the former. The latter may be eaſily known, by applying it to the mouth, and breathing ſtrongly upon it; if it is penetrated by the breath, it is accounted genuine. The older the *pon-*

cul-tcha is, the more it is in requeſt; it is even pretended, that it has been kept in ſome families, with aſtoniſhing precautions, for more than a century: but this is an affair of taſte, abſolutely foreign to commerce.

China Ink.

THIS is a compoſition of fiſh-glue, ox-gall, and lamp-black. When in a liquid ſtate, it is poured into ſmall wooden moulds, where it is ſuffered to harden.

The Chineſe conſider it as an excellent remedy for ſpitting of blood. They keep ſome of it, therefore, often in their mouths, as the Europeans do lozenges. The beſt is made at *Tchenan*, a city of the province of Nankin, ſituated on the *Kiang*, or blue river. That of the fineſt quality is dry, hard, black, and ſhining.

GALEGA.

THERE are two kinds of galega. The firſt, and the largeſt, is a thick, heavy plant, covered with a hard, reddiſh bark, whitiſh in the inſide, and of a ſharp, bitter taſte. Its flower is like that of peaſe, without ſmell, and ſometimes of a blue, and ſometimes of a white colour. It gives an agreeable taſte to vinegar, and is accounted a ſpecific in diſorders of the breaſt.

The ſecond ſort is a hard root, of the ſize of the little finger, reddiſh within and without, and of a ſtronger and more aromatic taſte than the former. The plant which riſes from it, has the form of a ſmall tree, bearing leaves like thoſe of the myrtle. It ought to be choſen freſh, juicy, of a high colour, compact, odoriferous, and with a ſharp aromatic taſte. The Chineſe cut it into

into pieces of the ſize of a filbert, in order that they may be dried and tranſported with more eaſe. They conſider it as an excellent antidote. Theſe two kinds of galega are cultivated in the province of *Xanſy*, and the merchants of the city of *Tayven* carry on a trade in them.

GAMBOGE.

THIS is a reſinous gummy juice, of a yellow colour, extracted drop by drop on inciſion, from a prickly ſhrub, which riſes to a conſiderable height, and climbs round other trees like ivy. The beſt kind is brittle, hard, high-coloured, of an inſipid taſte at firſt, and then ſharpiſh, inflammable, and capable of being, in a great meaſure, diſſolved in ſpirits of wine. This gum, which

is uſed in medicine, is procured from *Sigan*, a village in the province of *Kiangsi*. Some people prefer the gamboge of Siam to that of China.

GUM LAC.

THIS gum, employed in the compoſition of Spaniſh wax, ought to be choſen in bright tranſparent leaves. It is brought from *Quanton*, in the province of *Queicheu*; but it is much inferior to that of Bengal.

CURCUMA.

THE curcuma is a plant, the root of which is hard, of a yellowiſh colour, both within and without, and approaches near to that of ginger.

ginger. It bears a purple flower; its fruit is covered with briſtles, like the Indian cheſtnut; and its ſeeds, which are as round as peaſe, are good to eat. They are boiled with meat, and mixed alſo with rice, and different kinds of ragouts. This plant is uſed likewiſe in medicine; and it produces a fine ſaffron-coloured dye. It ought to be choſen freſh, heavy, compact, juicy, and of a beautiful yellow colour. The beſt comes from *Carfung*, in the province of *Honan*.

QUICKSILVER.

THIS fluid, heavy mineral, which penetrates gold and ſilver, is a natural production of ſeveral parts of China and the Eaſt-Indies. It is generally found in the mountains, covered with a kind of ſoft ſtones, as white as chalk. It is remarked, that the plants

plants which grow upon theſe mountains are greener and taller than any where elſe; but the trees ſeldom produce fruit. When a thick miſt, or vapour, which does not aſcend very high, is ſeen to ariſe from the mountain, it is a certain ſign that there is a mine of quickſilver below. The richeſt mines are thoſe ſituated towards the north: they are always ſurrounded by water, which muſt be evacuated before they are worked.

It is ſeldom poſſible to get quickſilver pure from the mine, as it is found mixed with earth, or reduced to natural cinnabar, that is to ſay, mercury combined with ſulphur. If the mercury is mixed only with a ſmall quantity of earth, it is ſtrained through a ſhamoy ſkin, on which the earth remains alone; but when it is in the form of native cinnabar, it muſt be extracted by means of iron and fire. The iron ſerves to detach the ſulphureous acid which confined the

mercury;

mercury; and the fire gives the mercury an opportunity of ſhooting in a receiver filled with water, which is neceſſary, that it may condenſe, by the coolneſs it finds when it riſes from the fire.

This mineral ſubſtance, being compoſed of ſmall globules, always diſunited, is the more difficult to be fixed and retained when it is preſſed. It remains, however, motionleſs, when ſuffered to ſettle in one place; yet the old Eaſt India Company gave over carrying any of it in their veſſels, for fear of accidents. It was brought home by the commanders of private ſhips, who were leſs timid, and without any inconvenience, after uſing proper precautions. The advantage they derived from this article, ought to encourage us to imitate them, provided we do not neglect the neceſſary preſervatives.

CIN-

CINNABAR.

THERE are two ſorts of cinnabar: one natural, which is found perfectly formed in the bowels of the earth, as deſcribed in the preceding article; and the other artificial, which conſiſts of three parts of crude mercury, and one of ſulphur, mixed and ſublimated together. The latter pounded a long time on a piece of porphyry, may be reduced to a very fine powder, called vermilion, which is one of the moſt beautiful red colours we have. It is uſed for rendering Spaniſh wax red. Fine cinnabar ought to be of a bright red colour.

BORAX.

THIS is a ſalt, proper for accelerating the fuſion of metals. It muſt be choſen

as

as white and cryſtalline as poſſible. It is, generally, in pieces as broad as the hand, and from one to two inches in thickneſs, when it has not been broken. One muſt not, however, be too nice in having it always in large maſſes: were they no bigger than an egg, it is a matter of no conſequence, provided they are white and pure. The borax procured from Surat, is much inferior to that of China.

RHUBARB.

THIS is a large root, which grows in low, cold, moiſt places, in the provinces of *Houquang* and *Leaotong*. Its leaves are broad, of a dark green colour, and have an acid and agreeable taſte. When the root is taken from the earth, its outer bark is ſcraped off, as well as the thin yellow membrane

which is below; it is then perforated, and filed on a ſtring, in order that it may be ſuſpended in the open air, or dried in the ſhade. The largeſt pieces are not the beſt, becauſe the ſurface of them only becomes dry. Rhubarb ought to be choſen in pieces of a moderate ſize, two inches at moſt in thickneſs; flat, hard, and heavy; freſh, ſmooth on the outſide, and of a ſaffron and nutmeg colour; veined in the heart, and having a bitter taſte, and an aromatic ſmell. The excellence of this plant as a remedy, is well known: it produces alſo, a yellow die, which makes it at all times an article of great conſumption.

China Root.

THIS plant, called *ſmilax China*, has a root as large as a child's hand. It is

twiſted, full of knots, reddiſh on the outſide, of a fleſh colour in the heart, and deſtitute of ſmell. It ſends forth thorny ſtalks, which are of a creeping nature, and which climb around ſuch trees as grow in its neighbourhood. It muſt be choſen full, heavy, and compact; of a reddiſh colour, and free from rottenneſs: for it is much ſubject to be gnawed by worms. It is employed with ſucceſs as a medicine, in the province of *Onanſi*, where it abounds. The Chineſe uſe it for food, inſtead of rice; and this contributes not a little to render them hardy.

Musk.

THIS is a kind of bilious, fermented, curdled, and almoſt corrupted blood, taken from a bag under the belly of a ſpecies of roe-buck, the hair of which is dry, brown, and

and brittle. When the animal is killed, this bag is cut off; and the curdled blood being ſeparated from it, is hung up to dry in the ſun. In this ſituation it is ſoon converted into a light ſubſtance, almoſt in powder, and of a brown colour, which is again put into the bag for the ſake of tranſportation. Theſe animals are caught in the beginning of ſummer, becauſe, having been half-ſtarved during winter, on account of the ſnow, which lies very deep on the ground, their blood is heated, and in a ſtate of fermentation.

Muſk ought to be choſen very dry, and in bags of the ſize of an egg, thin, having a ſtrong ſmell, and well covered with hair, which ſhould be of a brown colour. It is neceſſary to obſerve carefully, that the bags have not been opened, and again ſewed up; and that no ſmall ſtones, or bits of lead, have been put into them, which is a trick very

common among the Chineſe. If one is obliged to keep the muſk ſeparate from the bag, it ought to be preſerved in a leaden box, in order that the coolneſs of the metal may prevent it from becoming dry, and contracting a bad ſmell.

TOUTENAG.

THIS is a white, metallic alloy, made of tin and biſmuth; hard, compact, and heavy. The beſt, which is in cakes, is very ſonorous when ſtruck, and pure and brilliant when broken. The emperor of China, alone, has the right of ſelling to his ſubjects, gold, quickſilver, and toutenag.

MOTHER

MOTHER OF PEARL.

THIS article conſiſts of large thick oyſter-ſhells, of a grey colour on the outſide, and ſmooth and ſilvery within. They have internally the ſame beauty and ſplendor as thoſe pearls which are commonly found in them.

The Chineſe do not procure theſe ſhells in their own country, but from Cochin-china and Camboja. They manufacture all kinds of toys of them; and uſe them alſo inſtead of window-glaſs, as they admit almoſt as much light as ſome of our glaſs in Europe. They employ them, likewiſe, in making lime; not for building, becauſe it is not ſo ſtrong a cement as that made of ſtone; but for plaſter and ſtucco, as it is much finer and whiter. Mother of pearl ought to be choſen of a beautiful white co-

lour, thick and ſmooth, and, above all, free from yellow or grey ſpots and veins.

VARNISH.

THE Chineſe varniſh is a compoſition of a viſcous liquor extracted from different ſhrubs and ſmall reddiſh worms, about the ſize of the ſilk-worm. After theſe worms have been boiled in water, the ſurface of it appears covered with a kind of oily ſubſtance, which is carefully collected, and which immediately fixes and becomes hard; but it may be ſoftened by heat, when it is neceſſary to uſe it. This ſecond kind of varniſh is much ſuperior to the firſt.

There is, however, a third kind, which is of a ſtill better quality, and in much greater requeſt. It is made of a kind of gum called *cie*, which, in ſummer, diſtils from

from certain trees under the form of the tears of the turpentine tree. The yellow is the beſt; that which is black is indifferent.

The *cie*, when freſh and moiſt, exhales a malignant vapour which occaſions paleneſs and prodigious ſwelling in the faces of thoſe who collect it for the firſt time. This malady cannot be cured but by rubbing the part affected with the aſhes of burned feathers. Without this remedy the diſorder increaſes, a fever enſues, and the patient is expoſed to great danger.

Works to which this varniſh is applied do not dry except in a very moiſt place, which requires time; but when they are once dry, they remain always in the ſame ſtate, and never alter. Articles which are well varniſhed, receive ſeven coats of varniſh, one of which is never laid upon another until the former is perfectly dry. Hence

it happens that the varniſh of thoſe pieces of furniture manufactured at Canton, which being made in haſte, according as they are ordered, and have not had time to dry, retains a diſagreeable odour, not obſerved in thoſe of Nankin, which are in the greateſt requeſt, next to thoſe of Japan. The brilliancy peculiar to the Nankin varniſh is given to it by poliſhing, and by inſinuating into the pores of the wood a kind of powder, which incorporates with it, and produces that luſtre ſo much admired.

Great care ought to be taken that the different coats are laid on evenly and ſmoothly, without bliſters, and that the figures are well executed.

CINNAMON.

THIS odoriferous bark, the beſt of which is, without doubt, that of the iſland of Ceylon,

Ceylon, is found alſo in China. The Chineſe cinnamon is of a ſuperior quality to that of Cochin, and may be procured at a moderate price. This bark ought to be choſen thin, of a beautiful brown colour like that of Spaniſh ſnuff, and of a very ſharp taſte. Cinnamon of the firſt quality is in great requeſt.

One may procure likewiſe in China ſtaraniſeſeed, which ought to be choſen freſh, and of a fine odour, as well as cardamum, equal in goodneſs to that of the Malabar coaſt. The pods ought to be of a triangular form, having the ſeeds in the inſide brown, and of a ſharp, aromatic taſte; and the membrane which incloſes them ought to be odoriferous, and of a bright yellow colour. The neweſt is the beſt.

GINSENG.

GINSENG.

THIS oriental plant, ſo much celebrated, grows in the mountains of Tartary, which border on certain provinces of the Chineſe empire. Its ſtem, which is as thick as that of wheat, and about a foot in height, bears at firſt red buttons, which expand each into ſix white leaves like thoſe of the violet. This knotty root has almoſt the figure of the mandragora; but it is ſmaller, tranſparent, and interſperſed with ſmall black veins, which form two or three branches. It has a ſweet taſte, with a ſlight mixture of bitterneſs; and is of an aromatic ſmell, which is far from being diſagreeable. This root, in order that it may be preſerved, is dried, and then it becomes red on the outſide, and yellowiſh within. It is ſold at a high price, eſpecially when it is of a good quality.

quality. Thoſe kinds which are brown and grey are much inferior to the other.

Worms ſometimes get into the ginſeng, and gnaw it, which would render it unfit for ſale, were it not for the cunning of the Chineſe, who have the patience to fill up the holes with a yellow powder which has a great reſemblance to the colour of the root. They inſinuate this powder into the ſmall eyes of the plant, with ſo much art, that one muſt be a great conoiſſeur to avoid being deceived. The Chineſe themſelves, however, are ſometimes dupes, in their turn, to the fraud of ſome European merchants, who mix with their oriental ginſeng a certain quantity of that of Canada, which is far inferior in value. It is deficient not only in colour, ſmell, and tranſparency, but alſo in its virtue and properties. Notwithſtanding the high idea entertained of this plant, the trials made of it in Europe never

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correſponded with the wonders aſcribed to it by the Chineſe.

The immoderate uſe of ginſeng would ſoon bring on death. The rich are contented with taking, in the morning, a ſmall quantity of it, equal in weight to about a grain of corn. When taken in ſmall doſes, either infuſed or in powder, it is ſalutary for old men, and thoſe who are exhauſted by exceſſes: but it is prejudicial to young people, and to thoſe who are of a warm temperament. The ſtrength and virtue of this root is ſo great, that the ſame doſe of it will ſerve twice for infuſion without any addition.

The beſt ginſeng ought to be freſh, heavy, of a ſtrong ſmell, and free from caries and worm-holes. The Chineſe name of it ſignifies *reſemblance to the thighs of a man.*

NANKIN

NANKIN SILK.

THIS ſilk is the moſt eſteemed on account of its clearneſs and whiteneſs. When it does not poſſeſs theſe two qualities, it ought to be rejected. Care ought to be taken alſo, that in the ſkains there be no bad ſilk in large flocks, which ſerve to increaſe its weight; and not to purchaſe it till it has been well dried, and expoſed to the air, in order to guard againſt the deception of the Chineſe, who often keep it ſhut up in moiſt places.

SILK STUFFS.

SILK ſtuffs of a good quality ought to have fine borders, and to be cloſely woven, very ſoft, ſmooth, and bright. To judge of

of the goodneſs of a piece of ſilk, one muſt not be directed by the weight; becauſe the more Canton ſilk, which is a hard kind of an inferior quality, has been employed in manufacturing it, the more it will weigh. Stuffs made of that ſilk do not take the die well, eſpecially green and blue colours; and they are always hard and ſtiff to the touch. The goodneſs of a piece of ſattin or damaſk may be known by its being ſoft, ſmooth, and even. If made of coarſe ſilk, it will be rough and uneven.

The woof of the ſtuffs manufactured at Canton is made of coarſe ſilk, which renders them very inferior to thoſe of Nankin, where the materials are finer, and where the workmen are more ſkilful, becauſe they ſupply furniture for the emperor's palace.

The principal ſilk ſtuffs brought from China are, Plain pekins of from 11 ½ to 12 ells by ⅝.

Luſtrings, of 12 ells by from $\frac{5}{4}$ to $\frac{7}{3}$, and of 14 ells by the ſame.

Plain gourgourans, of 13 ells by $\frac{1}{4}$, and of 14 ells by $\frac{1}{8}$.

Plain padeſoys of 14 ells by $\frac{5}{8}$, and nearly $\frac{5}{8}$.

Double ditto of 14 ells.

Pekin handkerchiefs, twenty in a piece.

Plain, embroidered, and brocaded ſattins, of from $11\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 ells by $\frac{5}{8}$.

Plain and painted gauzes, ſingle or double.

Lampaſes for dreſſes, of 12 ells by $\frac{5}{8}$.

Ditto for furniture, of from $21\frac{1}{2}$ to 22 ells by $\frac{1}{2}$.

Painted pekins for dreſſes, of from 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 22 ells by $\frac{3}{8}$.

Yellow nankeens; firſt, ſecond, and third kinds.

White ditto, firſt and ſecond kinds.

White nankeen cloth, in pieces of twenty-ſeven ells.

PORCELAIN.

WE are not informed who was the inventor of porcelain, nor to what chance or experiments we are indebted for that diſcovery. It is, however, probable, according to ſome of the Chineſe annals, that porcelain was uſed in China before the year 424 of the Chriſtian æra. Since that period it has been gradually brought to a degree of perfection, which induces the moſt opulent people in Europe to uſe it.

Formerly the manufacturers of porcelain reſided in the cities *Feou-leang*, *Kinte-ching*, and *jao-tcheou*, in the province of *Kiangſi*. The works which were made there, and tranſported to foreign kingdoms, had no other name than *valuable jewels* of *jao-tcheou* and *Kinte-ching*. Porcelain was afterwards manufactured in other places; but it is very different both in colour and fineneſs.

Strangers

Strangers may, without any difficulty, diſtinguiſh that which is made in the provinces of Canton and Fokien. It is of a coarſe white colour, without brightneſs, and without any mixture of thoſe delicate tints which are peculiar to the porcelain of Kinte-ching. The latter is unqueſtionably the fineſt known; and is even purchaſed by the Japaneſe themſelves.

The Europeans procure almoſt all their porcelain from Canton, except that which is ordered: for the Chineſe merchants ſend models to *Kinte-ching* to have various articles manufactured in the ſame manner; but it often happens that the workmen, being ſure of a ready ſale for their own patterns, neglect theſe works, and do not give themſelves the trouble to correct any faults which may be in the materials or the workmanſhip. One ought never to give commiſſions of that kind but to merchants

of eſtabliſhed probity and reputation, who may be intereſted in cauſing them to be well executed upon the ſpot. Beſides this, there is another inconvenience in theſe commiſſioned works. Being all made according to new models, in which it is difficult to ſucceed, if they have even a few imperfections, they are rejected by the Europeans, who will purchaſe nothing but what is thoroughly finiſhed. They remain therefore in the hands of the manufacturers, who not being able to diſpoſe of them to the Chineſe, becauſe they are not agreeable to their taſte, lay upon the pieces they ſell an additional price, in order to make up for the loſs they ſuſtain by thoſe which are returned.

Nothing is more certain than that the difficulty of imitating models ſent from Europe, is one of thoſe cauſes which augment the price of porcelain when ordered; for we muſt not believe that the workmen

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can copy every pattern indiſcriminately which is ſent to them from foreign nations. There are ſome really impracticable in China; though, at the ſame time, the Chineſe can execute ſome ſurpriſing works, which we, in our turn, conſider as impoſſible.

Several people imagine, that porcelain acquires a ſuperior degree of perfection when it has been buried in the earth. This, however, is a falſe idea, which the Chineſe ridicule. The hiſtory of Kinte-ching, ſpeaking of the beautiful porcelain of old times, informs us, that it was in ſo much requeſt, that ſcarcely were the furnaces opened when the merchants diſputed who ſhould have it, which certainly does not imply that it was buried in the earth. It is very true, that in digging up ruins, or in clearing old neglected wells, ſome very beautiful pieces of porcelain are now and then found, which

have been hid during the time of war or revolutions; but theſe pieces are beautiful merely becauſe the owners of them thought of concealing only the moſt valuable, with a view of finding them again when the troubles were over. If they are highly valued, it is not on account of their having acquired any ſuperior quality in the boſom of the earth, but becauſe their ancient beauty is preſerved. There are ſome connoiſſeurs alſo in China, who give a high price for the moſt trifling utenſils employed by their emperors in remote ages. All the change made in porcelain by lying long in the earth, reſpects its tints and colouring. This mark of antiquity is obſerved alſo in marble and ivory; but ſooner than in porcelain, the varniſh and enamel of which retard the progreſs of moiſture.

A method has been lately diſcovered of imitating the ancient porcelain, or at leaſt

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that of conſiderable antiquity. Pieces of this kind are generally very thick and heavy. They are firſt dipped in common mixed with yellow oil, which gives them, when baked, a ſea-green colour: they are then baked a ſecond time, in a very fat kind of liquor made from capons and other meat, after which they are put into a dirty ſewer for two or three months; and at the end of that time they reſemble porcelain made three or four hundred years ago, which was the period when pieces of that colour and thickneſs were eſteemed by the Chineſe. Theſe falſe antiques reſemble the real alſo, in not reſounding when ſtruck, and in producing no humming noiſe when applied to the ear.

The Chineſe are remarkably fond of thoſe glaſs and cryſtal wares which are brought to them from Europe. Porcelain, however, is preferable; for it has a certain

kind

kind of ſplendour as well as glaſs; and if it is leſs tranſparent, it is alſo leſs brittle. It likewiſe bears warm liquors; and one may hold it in the hand with boiling tea, which could not be done with a ſilver cup of the ſame figure and thickneſs.

The Chineſe ſucceed extremely well in forming groteſque figures and animals of porcelain. This kind of china is commonly called *iſcky*.

Such, in general, are the principal objects which might be procured from this vaſt empire, with the hope of certain gain. I ſhall therefore now ſay a few words reſpecting certain Aſiatic articles which might be carried to China, and ſold there with conſiderable profit.

Aphrodiſiacs and reſtoratives are in great requeſt among the Chineſe. They are, above all, fond of a kind of birds neſts, found on the rocks near the ſea-coaſt,

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and made by a ſpecies of ſmall ſwallows, of the fry of fiſh and a viſcous foam which the ſun afterwards hardens. Their price is in proportion to their quality. The iſland of Java furniſhes the beſt: the white are moſt eſteemed.

The Chineſe ſet a great value, alſo, on the fins of the ſhark, the ſea priapus, crabs, ſago, tripam, and a certain kind of Molucca beans deſcribed by Rumphius.

Sago is the pith of a palm of the ſame name found in the iſland of Timor. Tripam is a ſmall ſpongy plant without roots, and reſembling a muſhroom. The rounder and blacker it is, it is ſo much the more perfect. It is very common at the iſland of Celebes.

As the moſt exquiſite food appears inſipid to the Chineſe, and as every thing they eat requires to be heightened by ſeaſoning, they conſume large quantities of ſpiceries, ſuch as cloves, nutmegs, and pepper.

The beſt cloves are procured at the iſland of Amboyna. They ought to be full, juicy, heavy, of a ſtrong odour, and hot aromatic taſte, and to leave a ſlight oil on the fingers.

The nutmegs and mace of the iſland of Banda are the moſt eſteemed. They ought to be choſen freſh, round, heavy, of a ſtrong ſmell and taſte, ſomewhat bitteriſh, and with an oily juice.

Benjamin and opium, ſandal wood, ambergris, camphire of Sumatra, and Socotrine aloes may alſo be carried to China. The latter article, which grows in the iſland of Socotora, near the Red Sea, ought to be bright and tranſparent, to have a tawny colour, with a bitter aromatic taſte, and to be almoſt deſtitute of ſmell.

Benjamin may be procured at Bantam. This aromatic gum is commonly ſold in boxes of one or two hundred weight each. It ought to be choſen with a ſtrong ſmell,

and marbled in different places, in the inside with white.

The Bengal opium is preferable to any other. It is the inſpiſſated juice of poppies, formed into ſmall cakes. It ought to be ſomewhat ſoft, of a browniſh colour and ſtrong fetid ſmell, and to yield to the finger when preſſed. That which is dry, friable, burnt, and mixed with earth, is of a bad quality.

Sandal wood ought to be heavy, to have a ſweet ſmell, no pith, and to be of a beautiful fleſh colour in the inſide.

Ambergris is found on the ſea-coaſt, in many parts of India. This reſinous, ſpongy, and inflammable ſubſtance is reckoned to be of a good quality when it is of a cinder-grey colour, and has a fine ſmell. The maſſes are of different forms; but generally they are flat, of the ſize of the hand, and conſiſt of different coats, or leaves, two or

three lines in thickneſs; ſo that ten or twelve leaves, laid one upon another, form at leaſt the thickneſs of two or three inches. The bills of paroquets are ſometimes found in them, which is a certain ſign that they are of a good quality.

I ſhall terminate this article with ſome remarks on the trade which might be eaſily carried on at Timor, ſituated to the ſouth of the Moluccas, and to the eaſt of Java. The articles which will find the readieſt ſale there, are fuſees, gun-flints, powder and ball, piſtols, ſabres, iron in bars, common toys, cloth of different colours, ſilver bracelets, coarſe handkerchiefs, and Indian cotton ſtuffs, a little opium, and Spaniſh or Madeira wine of a rough flavour.

In return, one might procure rice, ſaltpetre, tortoiſe-ſhell, wax, ſandal, and ſapan wood, and even a little gold. Large quantities of *cadiang*, a kind of ſmall beans, which

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the Dutch give to their ſailors, may be alſo procured here.

I ſhall paſs over in ſilence a branch of commerce which humanity, reaſon, and philoſophy have ſhewn to be odious; without, however, having been able to triumph over prejudices, habitude, and the ſelf-intereſtedneſs of a few individuals. When ſhall we have the happineſs not to be acquainted with ſlavery in our colonies?

THE END.

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